DAMOH

CENTRAL PROVINCES
DISTRICT GAZETTEERS

DAMOH DISTRICT

A. VOLUME DESCRIPTIVE

EDITED BY R. V. RUSSELL, I.C.S.

ALLAHABAD
PRINTED AT THE PIONEER PRESS
1906

PREFATORY NOTE.

The extant Settlement Reports on the Damoh District are those of Mr. A. M. Russell on the 30 years' settlement (1866), and of Mr. J. B. Fuller, then Commissioner of Settlements, on the settlement concluded in 1888-91, and coming into effect from 1894. Mr. Fuller's short report published in 1893 contains much valuable information and a great part of it has been reproduced in the Gazetteer. Notes on departmental subjects and replies to queries have been submitted by Mr. Jāgeshwar Dāmodar Udhojī, Extra Assistant Commissioner. An excellent note on the wild animals and birds of the District was kindly supplied by Dr. Quinn, for several years Civil Surgeon of Damoh. A note on the forests has been contributed by Mr. Gilmore, Divisional Forest Officer. In this as well as the Saugor Gazetteer a note on communications has been supplied by Mr. G. W. Neville, Executive Engineer. Some information on social life and customs furnished by Major Sutherland, I.M.S., for Saugor has been reproduced in the Damoh Gazetteer, as it is equally applicable to both Districts. Some historical and ethnographic information has been contributed by Mr. Hīra Lāl, Assistant Superintendent of Gazetteer. The remaining material for the Gazetteer except so far as it consists of extracts from printed reports has been obtained by the writer by local inquiries on tour. He is indebted to Khān Bahādur Imdād Alī and other native gentlemen of Damoh and Hattā for much of this. This volume is complete in itself and may be used without reference to the B volume, which is a collection of administrative statistics.

NAGPUR: R. V. R.

31st August 1905.

DAMOH DISTRICT GAZETTEER.

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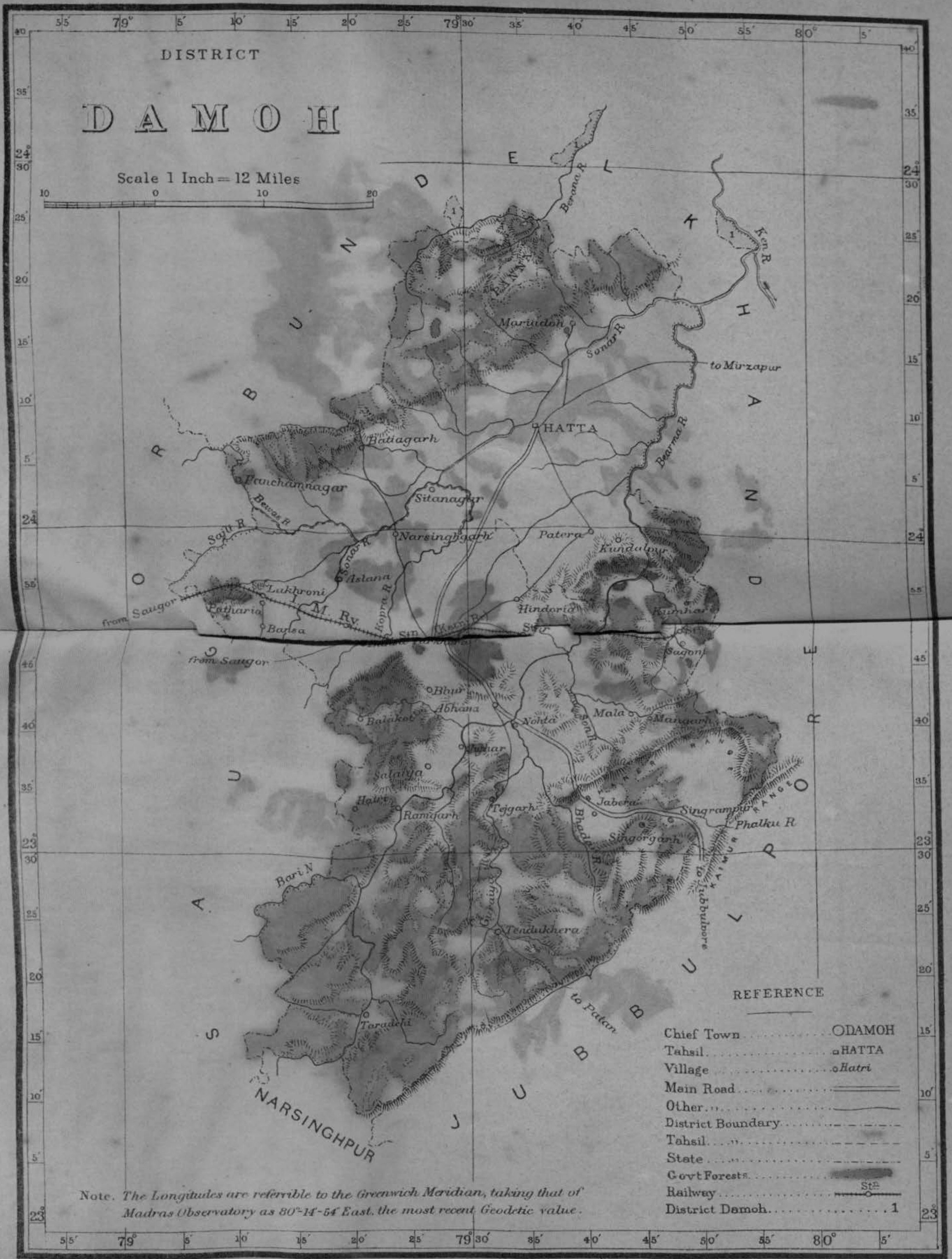
Name of place.

List of the Deputy Commissioners who have held charge of the Damoh District since its constitution, with the dates of their periods of office.

Name.	From	To
1. Capt. Murray ...	...	...
2. Mr. Duncan ...	...	...
3. Mr. Ch. Brown ...	...	...
4. Mr. Marsden ...	...	...
5. Capt. Tulloh ...	Up to 1849.	
6. *Mr. Elliott* ...	Up to 1850.	
7. Capt. Montgomerie ...	Up to 1851.	
8. Capt. Gordon ...	Up to 1852.	
9. Mr. Balmain ..	Up to 1854.	
10. Col. J. C. Wood ...	Up to 1855.	
11. Lieut. W. Nembhard ...	Up to 1857.	
12. Lieut.-Col. W.C. Hamilton.	Up to 1859.	
13. Lieut. T. W. Hogg ...	Up to 16-1-1860.	
14. Lieut.-Col. C. S. O. Gordon.	Up to 30-9-1860.	
15. Lieut. T. W. Hogg ...	Up to 24-2-1861.	
16. Lieut. A. W. Mayne ...	Up to 22-11-1861.	
17. Major J. N. W. Maclean	Up to 1862.	
18. Lieut.-Col. C. H. Grace	Up to September 1863.	
19. Capt. J. Ashburner ...	Up to 18-1-1864.	
20. Mr. A. G. W. Harris ...	Up to 4-1-1865.	
21. Col. R. T. Snow ...	For a few months.	
22. Mr. H. Read ...	Up to January 1869.	
23. Capt. G. Warner ...	Up to July 1869.	
24. Col. C. H. Plowden ...	Up to December 1869.	
25. Capt. C. H. Grace ...	Up to March 1871.	
26. Khān Bahādur Syed Aulād Husain, C.I.E.	Up to April 1871.	
27. Col. H. I. Lugard ...	Up to June 1872.	
28. Mr. G. T. Nicholls .	Up to December 1872.	
29. Lieut.-Col. W. B. Thompson.	Up to March 1881.	
30. Mr. T. E. Ellison ...	For a few months.	
31. Capt. E. Pemberton ...	In the absence of Col. Thompson on furlough.	
32. Mr. C. Berry ...	For a few months.	

List of Deputy Commissioners who have held charge of the Damoh District, etc.—(concld.)

Name.	From	To
33. Col. E. W. C. H. Miller	...	...
34. Lieut.-Col. T. W. Hogg	1-10-1882	3-3-1883
35. Mr. W. A. Nedham ...	4-3-1883	16-7-1883
36. Col. H. M. Repton ...	17-7-1883	10-4-1884
37. Lieut.-Col T. W. Hogg	11-4-1884	13-2-1888
38. Mr. C. W. McMinn ...	10-4-1888	5-8-1888
39. Col. H. I Lugard ...	6-8-1888	8-1-1893
40. Col. H. H. Hallett ...	9-1-1893	5-4-1893
41. Mr. F. J. Cooke ...	6-4-1893	30-9-1894
42. Mr. F. S. Tabor ...	1-10-1894	12-11-1894
43. Mr. F. J. Cooke ...	13-11-1894	30-4-1895
44. Mr. C. W. Burn ...	1-5-1895	13-8-1896
45. Mr. L. A. G Clarke ...	14-8-1896	18-11-1896
46. Mr. E. H. Blakesley ...	19-11-1896	1-8-1898
47. Mr. A. C. F. B. Blennerhasset.	2-8-1898	1-11-1898
48. Mr. E. H. Blakesley ...	2-11-1898	24-12-1899
49. Mr. W. N. Maw ...	25-12-1899	12-9-1901
50. Mr. J. A. Bathurst ...	13-9-1901	12-10-1901
51. Mr. W. N. Maw ...	13-10-1901	12-10-1902
52. Mr. C. A. Clarke ...	13-10-1902	30-12-1904
53. Mr. S. W. Coxon ...	31-12-1902	14-4-1904
54. Mr. J. A. Bathurst ...	15-4-1904	14-7-1904
55. Mr. S. W. Coxon ...	15-7-1904	to date.



No. 189 Gazetteer C. P.—Apr. 05.—400

Helio. S. I. O., Calcutta

DAMOH DISTRICT.

CHAPTER I.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION.

BOUNDARIES AND PHYSICAL FEATURES.

Position and boundaries.

1. Damoh ($23°9'$ to $24° 26'$ N. and $79° 3'$ to $79° 57'$ E.). A District in the Jubbulpore Division of the Central Provinces, lying at their northern extremity. On the west it abuts on Saugor with which it is closely connected geographically and historically. On the south and east it is bounded by the Jubbulpore District, and to the north it marches with the Bundelkhand States of Pannā and Chhatarpur. The District is divided into two tahsīls, Hattā lying north and Damoh south. The Damoh tahsīl contains nearly two-thirds of the District area and population. Damoh forms the easternmost spur of the great Vindhyan plateau or table-land, which stretches north of and parallel to the Nerbudda across the territories now included in the States of Gwalior, Bhopāl and Indore. The plateau rises abruptly from the Nerbudda valley in a line of steeply scarped hills, at the summit of which it reaches its greatest elevation and from which there is a gradual slope northwards. At its eastern extremity the Vindhyan table-land descends to the low country by a series of valleys between broken chains of hills. Damoh lies in this transition tract. Its principal valley is that of the Sonār river which forms a band of open, gently undulating country, running right through the District from south-west to north-east with an average breadth of about 20 miles. It is here that the principal villages are situated and the greater part of the population make their living. North of the Sonār

valley a line of flat-topped barren hills rises like a wall, beyond which there is an abrupt descent into Bundelkhand territory. South of the Sonār valley there stretches a mass of broken country terminating in the red cliffs of the Bhānrer range, from the foot of which spreads the fertile plain of Jubbulpore. The Bhānrer range ends abruptly at Katangī, giving place to the Kaimur range which curves across the country with sharp fish-like back. A picturesque opening between the two ranges gives passage to the Damoh-Jubbulpore road. The length of the District from north to south is a little over 80 miles and its width about 45. Its area is 2,816 square miles.

Hill-ranges.

2. As already stated the District consists of the northern and southern scarps of the Vindhyan plateau to the north-east and south-west, with the level valley of the Sonār river lying between them. The headquarters town Damoh lies on the border of the plain adjoining the southern hills. The southern face of the plateau locally called Bhānrer forms the Vindhyan range proper, but the whole system of small ranges stretching across the plateau are included in the Vindhyās according to the ordinary nomenclature. The hill system in the south is very confused with the exception of the regular Vindhyan or Bhānrer range and its continuation the Kaimur, and the different small ranges are not usually distinguished. The hills near Hindoria are, however, known as the Bhondlā range and those running from Māngarh to the Beārma as the Māngarh range. The height of the hills to the north and south is from 1,500 to 1,700 feet. The peak of Kalumār near the southern border is the highest point in the District with an elevation of 2,467 feet. Another point near Sailwāra is 1,939 feet high. The height of the plain country is 1,100 to 1,200 feet sinking to 1,000 feet at the north-eastern border near Gaisābād. Damoh town has an elevation of 1,202 feet and Hattā of 1,117. The hill of Panchamnagar is 1,691 feet high.

Rivers. Sonār and its affluents.

3. The rivers and streams follow the general slope of the country and flow northward, rising near the crest of the scarp over the Nerbudda and discharging their waters into the Ken which bears them to the Jumna. The main systems are those of the Sonār and the Beārma. The Sonār rises in the low hills in the south-west of Saugor and flows in a north-easterly direction through that District and Damoh passing Sītānagar, Narsinghgarh, Hattā and Aslāna. Its valley in Damoh, called the Havelī, is a fertile black-soil plain forming the principal wheat-growing tract of the District. The Sonār joins the Ken river four miles beyond the border of Damoh, and of its total length of 116 miles 64 lie within the District. The river does not attain to any great width and flows in a deep channel, its bed being usually stony. It is crossed by the railway at Belkhedī and by a causeway near Narsinghgarh. Its principal affluent is the Koprā which also rises in Saugor, and entering the District a little south of the old Saugor road, joins the Sonār near Sītānagar after a course in the District of 42 miles out of its total length of 60. It is crossed by a causeway at Kakrā on the Damoh-Narsinghgarh road. The Bewas also enters Damoh from Saugor passing Panchamnagar and flows into the Sonār after a short course in the District.

Other rivers.

4. The principal river of the south of the District is the Beārma which also rises in the hills of Rehlī tahsīl and flows through the District from south-east to north-west joining the Sonār just beyond the border. It traverses the most rugged and broken portion of the District, and during the greater part of its course is confined between rocky cliffs, while such valleys as open out are nowhere extensive. Its principal tributaries are the Guraiyā, the Sūn and the Pathrī with a character closely resembling its own. The Guraiyā rises near Tendūkhedā and joins the Beārma at Nohtā. The Sūn rises in Jubbulpore District, passes Māla and joins the Beārma near

Ghaterā. The small valley of Singrāmpur, which is cut off from the open country of Jubbulpore by the Kaimur range, possesses a drainage system of its own. The stream which waters it, the Phalku, flows in a southerly instead of northerly direction and joins the Nerbudda by forcing its way through an extraordinary cleft in the hills known as the 'Katās.' This valley until 1869 formed part of the Jubbulpore District, with which it has in some respects more affinities than with the rest of Damoh.

Physical features.

5. The most striking natural feature of the District is undoubtedly the sheer scarp of the Vindhyan range which for some distance overhangs the Jubbulpore plain, but turns inward where met by the Kaimur hills and forms the western enclosures of the landlocked valleys of Singrāmpur and Jaberā. An isolated buttress commanding the Jubbulpore-Damoh road carries the old hill fortress of Singorgarh. To one travelling through the southern half of the District the prevailing features are low hills and scrub jungle opening now and again into poor little upland valleys generally peopled by Gonds and less frequently into deeper and broader beds of black-soil cultivation. These last valleys, though generally of very small size, contain the best land in the District, the soil in the bed of the valley being richer and more fertile even than that of the *havelī*. The land is commonly embanked to retain water and grows wheat, often after a crop of rice. The holdings in which this land occurs are of much smaller size than the average. The soil responds more readily to cultivation than that of the *havelī*, industry pays better, and the tenants are in consequence more industrious, more independent and in better circumstances. The hills on either hand are stony and unculturable. They afford, however, excellent sites for the village houses, and a typical village of this class is perched on a rocky spur overlooking a group of well-tilled fields spread chess-board fashion beneath it. Among these valleys may be mentioned that of the Sūn

below Māngarh, where a very fertile group of villages called the Chaubīsa extends along the southern bank of the river. Round Abhāna and Nohtā the valley of the Beārma opens out into a stretch of fertile black soil which is commonly double-cropped. Another small but fertile valley is that of Kalumār-Chaurai near the Kalumār hill in the south. The Jaberā valley near Singorgarh, consisting of 28 villages lying in a cup of the hills, which is said formerly to have been one vast lake, is somewhat less fertile than these, and the same may be said of the Singhpur valley extending along the Phalku river, and the large Tejgarh valley of the Guraiyā and the small stream of the Bhaddar. In the extreme south-west a small group of fertile villages surrounds Tārādehī higher up the course of the Beārma. While the hilly country south of the Sonār valley covers more than half the District, that to the north is in comparison a mere strip. The most fertile land of the northern hills is comprised in the small level tracts round Kanodā, Dalpatpur and Narainpur. The general aspect of the hilly country is barren and sterile. It is covered with scrub forest generally of the poorest description; but no large portion of its area can ever profitably be cultivated and the trees or bushes it now bears would only give place to absolute nakedness. But to one judging of the District from the Sonār valley, these remarks would appear wholly inappropriate. The features there presented are those ordinarily met with in the open black-soil area, that is an expanse of cultivated fields dotted with prosperous looking villages embowered in groves of trees; and the lines of blue hills on the horizon are the only indication of the contrast awaiting him on either margin of the plain.

Interlacing of boundaries.

6. The boundaries of Damoh interlace with those of the States of Pannā and Bijāwar. Three villages of Damoh, Urlā, Kupi and Madaunā lie within the territory of the States, while seven villages of Pannā State, Diggi, Newās, Puttipurā, Puttī, Bāndha,

Pairā, and Kherī, and one village of Bijāwar, Bhartalā, are situated within Damoh District. This interlacing of boundaries owing to the facilities afforded by it for the smuggling of contraband liquor and drugs has in the past exercised a very injurious effect on the excise revenue of the District.

GEOLOGY.

Geology.

7. The District is mainly occupied by the upper division of the Vindhyan system made up of several thick masses of sandstone with alternations of shale. The calcareous element is deficient being represented only by a single limestone band of importance. The sandstone is of a pinkish colour, and the slabs lying horizontally offer little scope to weathering or to the absorption and storage of water. This fact may perhaps account for the thinness of the forest growth and the rapidity with which it loses its leaves. The rocks are not fossiliferous but many of them have beautiful ripple-marks plainly formed by the lapping of water on sand. The sandstone is softer and more clayey than that of Saugor, but good building-stone is found in some localities. The detritus of the Vindhyan sandstone forms the sandy soil known as *sihār*, which is of very poor natural fertility but responds readily to water and manure. Towards the west of the District the Deccan trap or basalt rock is met with, and the Sonār valley is entirely composed of the black cotton soil supposed to be formed from the decomposition of this volcanic rock, an origin for which is apparent in the trap region of the Saugor District where the Sonār takes its source. Black soil also occurs in the valleys which intersect the Vindhyan hills to the south; but here its presence is less easily accounted for. On the Jubbulpore border metamorphic rock occurs, forming the distinctive range of hills already mentioned as the Kaimur. Its strata have been upheaved into an almost vertical position and to this

the range owes its knife-edge peak and possibly the more enduring verdancy of its forest growth.

BOTANY.

8. About half the area of the District consists of forest or grass land. The growth of the forests is generally poor and stunted and there is little valuable timber. Teak is the principal timber tree and is found in the pole stage scattered or in small groups, being most common in the Mariādoh pargana. *Sāj* (*Terminalia tomentosa*), the second tree in importance, also does not attain to any size in Damoh. Its timber is largely used for houses and furniture. *Anogeissus acuminata* grows on river banks and is a most beautiful tree with rough and drooping branches. This tree is locally known as *dhaurā*, the common name of *Anogeissus latifolia*, to which it is a kindred species and which is also found in Damoh. *Kohā* (*Terminalia Arjuna*) is another picturesque tree growing on river banks, and can be recognised from sāj by its smooth grey bark, by its fruit angled rather than winged, and by its narrower leaves. It has a small white flower. *Tendū* or ebony (*Diospyros tomentosa*) is fairly common. The black heartwood is very valuable, and is used for furniture. The fruit is edible. *Sāleh* (*Boswellia serrata*) is a common tree on the dry hillsides, growing where others refuse to thrive. It is considered of little value locally. *Gunjā* (*Garuga pinnata*) is common in the Hattā tahsil. The timber of this tree is of good quality when it grows to a large size, but it is usually found as a small tree with little or no heartwood. The wood is sometimes used for planks and posts, and is a bad fuel. The bark is used for tanning and the leaves for fodder. *Kullū* (*Sterculia urens*) is another tree characteristic of the hills and plateaux, and is conspicuous for its light-coloured smooth bark. *Sejo* or *lendia* (*Lagerstrœmia parviflora*), is a common tree and is important as one of the best timbers of the mixed forests. Its wood is used for house-posts, rafters

Principal trees.

and agricultural implements. *Ghont* (*Zizyphus xylopyra*) is a small tree with grey or reddish brown bark, and thick oblong exfoliating scales. This tree is a very frequent one and lac is grown on it. It has a large round fruit and three pointed leaves like those of the *bel* tree (*Ægle Marmelos*) but smaller. *Hadlū* (*Adina cordifolia*) is a fairly common, and a beautiful and imposing tree with white rough bark, and large round leaves. Its wood is used for planks. *Chheolā* or *palās* (*Butea frondosa*) is a tree of moderate size, common both in Government and private forest. It has brilliant scarlet-orange flowers which are locally called *tesū* and give a good yellow dye. It exudes a ruby-coloured gum when cut, which is used as a medicine for dysentery. Ropes are made from the fibres of the roots, and are said to withstand the rains better than ordinary hemp. Lac is largely grown on this tree. *Khair* (*Acacia Catechu*), a kindred species to the babūl, is a very common tree whose wood gives the catechu of commerce. *Aonlā* (*Phyllanthus Emblica*) is a small but pretty and ornamental tree found both in the forests and in villages. The bark and leaves are used for tanning and as a medicine, and the fruit is eaten as a chutney. This tree is held sacred and on one day of the year people go and eat food under it, believing that they will thereby obtain remission of their sins. *Dhavai* (*Woodfordia floribunda*) is a large shrub with a much fluted stem, and very thin grey bark peeling off in scales. This is a conspicuous shrub on dry hillsides and rocky ground with red flowers, from which a dye is obtained for colouring silk. *Kūmhi* (*Cochlospermum Gossypium*) is a small tree with thick spreading branches and is characteristic of the driest and stoniest slopes. It is always conspicuous whether leafless, but covered with large brilliant yellow flowers, or in full foliage with glossy green leaves. *Achār* (*Buchanania latifolia*) is a very common tree in the forests and is only leafless for a short time. Its characteristic bark, dark-grey or nearly black in colour, and thick, rough and tessellated with regular boss-like prominences, makes this tree

conspicuous. The kernel of the fruit is called *chironjī* and is a favourite sweetmeat coated with sugar. *Karondā* (*Carissa Carandas*) is a large thorny shrub whose branches are used for fencing. The fruit is eaten in tarts and jam.

Trees of the open country.

9. Among trees in the open country *babūl* (*Acacia arabica*) is mainly found on roadside avenues, having sprung up from seed thrown broadcast along the sides. It also frequents the open black-soil fields of the *havelī*, but is not so common as in some other Districts. The wood is used for cart-wheels, and a tanning agent is extracted from the bark. Mahuā trees are numerous in the hilly country but not in the *havelī*. Mango-groves are not so frequently found near the villages in Damoh as in other Districts. *Nīm* (*Melia indica*) is a common village tree, and is also found in roadside avenues for which it makes an excellent tree, giving shade in the hot season when other trees are bare. Banyan, pipal and tamarind are other village trees, though the last is not plentiful. The *ber* or wild plum (*Zizyphus Jujuba*) is a common village tree, as is also the *bel* (*Ægle Marmelos*), the tree sacred to Siva. The fruit of the latter is used as a medicine. The pretty *mungā* (*Moringa pterygosperma*) is largely cultivated in villages for its fruit which is eaten as a curry and a vegetable and is a favourite article of food. The *khajūr* or date-palm (*Phœnix sylvestris*) is not common.

Grasses.

10. The best grazing grasses in the District are *musyāl* (*Iseilema laxum*) and *kel* or *kailā* (*Andropogon annulatus*). The leaves of *kel* are long and those of *musyāl* are short; the latter is a small grass which keeps fresh for a long time. Many fields are put under grass, which is not sown but grows spontaneously. *Parwaivā* or *parbī* (*Heteropogon contortus*) is also a good grazing-grass especially when young. After it has flowered it is used for thatching. *Ganer* or *gunaiyā* (*Anthistiria scandens*) is used for fodder when young, but is not considered a valuable grass here. Its spikelets turn to a bright reddish

colour after flowering. *Sonthā* (*Ophiurus corymbosus*) is chiefly used for thatching and only as fodder when other grasses fail. *Kāns* (*Saccharum spontaneum*) is much feared in Damoh as it infests black-soil fields, whenever they are left fallow or become exhausted by cultivation, and long resting fallows are necessary to eradicate it. It is used for thatching and also for making mats and for the little shelters erected on the *machāns* or elevated platforms on which the watchers of the crops sit. It is also used as twine. Kāns grass should be spread below the corpses of Hindus when they are carried to burial. *Sawān* or *dhunia* (*Panicum frumentaceum*) grows in *jhīls* or damp places. Its seeds are gathered by the Chamārs in baskets and eaten. *Kush* grass *Eragrostis cynosuroides*) is fairly common on the banks of streams and tanks. Cattle do not eat it as a rule. It produces a fairly strong fibre which is much used for making ropes. This is a sacred grass and in all funeral ceremonies the chief mourner wears a ring of it on his finger.

WILD ANIMALS, ETC.

Wild animals.

11. The forests of the District are fairly well stocked with game. The following notes are taken from information kindly furnished by Dr. Quinn, for several years Civil Surgeon of Damoh and a sportsman with much local experience. Neither the wild buffalo nor the bison are found in Damoh. The tiger (*Felis tigris*) called locally *nāhar* is fairly common. It is very destructive to cattle, less so to game, and except when wounded scarcely ever to man. Man-eating tigers are scarcely known. Tigers are found on the hills and rocky ravines in wet weather. They select particular haunts, and when one is shot another after a brief interval takes its place. They are not very large in Damoh. The leopard or panther (*Felis pardus*), called locally *tendua*, is found in large numbers all over the District. It causes great destruction to cattle, being in this respect a greater pest than the tiger. The leopard cat (*Felis Bengalensis*) Hind. *cheetā billī*, has been seen in Damoh The length of its head and body is 24 to

26 inches, and of its tail 11 to 13 inches. On one occasion it was easily destroyed by a fox-terrier. The jungle cat (*Felis chaus*) Hind. *Junglī billī*, is very common and very destructive to pea-fowl, partridges, and hares. The Indian lynx (*Felis caracal*) is very rare. It frequents scrub jungle and can be tamed. In some parts of Central India they are said to be trained to stalk hares and gazelles. The small Indian civet (*Viverricula Malaccensis*) is very common and the Indian palm civet (*Paradoxurus niger*) is found in several parts of the District. The Indian desert cat (*Felis ornata*) has been seen once by Dr. Quinn. The striped hyæna (*Hyæna striata*) is found in all parts of the District. The wolf (*Canis pallipes*) is very rare and hence is not destructive. But Forsyth relates how a she-wolf and her full-grown cub carried away several children from a village in the District. The wild dog (*Cyon Dukhunensis*) is found in the forests and is very destructive to game. It has little or no fear of man and attempts made to tame it have failed. Jackals and foxes are very common. The common otter (*Lutra vulgaris*) is found in all parts of the District in rivers and streams and sometimes also in tanks. It lives in burrows with several entrances just above the water and usually one underneath. The sloth or Indian bear (*Ursus labiatus*) Hind. *rīchh* or *adamzād*, is found all over the District. It lives in caves in the hot and wet weather, and when it has young. In the cold season it lives in grass and bushes. When the mahuā is in fruit bears can easily be shot in the morning on their way home from the groves. When wounded they charge fearlessly. The young are easily tamed but are a nuisance. The bear dies hard and Dr. Quinn relates that he has put as many as four ·577 express bullets into the body of one without bringing it down.

Deer and antelope.

12. The District has most of the deer of the Province but not the *bārāsinghā* or swamp-deer. Sāmbhar or *rūsa* deer (*Cervus unicolor*) are found all over the District. *Cheetal* or spotted deer are not so common as sāmbhar, and are usually to be met with

on the borders of rivers. The nīlgai is found in all parts of the District. Herds of black-buck are common in the open country, and are destructive to the crops. The heads do not run to the same size as in the neighbouring District of Saugor. The four-horned antelope (*Tetracerus quadricornis*) is fairly common, and the *chinkāra* or Indian gazelle is numerous in all parts of the District. The rib-faced or barking deer (*Cervulus muntjac*) is rare. Two specimens have been seen in the north-western range.

Land game-birds, and shore birds.

13. Among land game-birds may be mentioned the painted sand-grouse, which is rare and usually found in couples on open ground; while the common or rock sand-grouse is found in large numbers all over the District in the season. They may be seen late in the evening near water where they drink before retiring for the night, and Dr. Quinn thinks that they spend the night by the water. So far as he has observed they do not breed locally and he has never met with the young. The common peafowl is found in all parts of the District. This bird is not considered sacred locally, and is destroyed by both Hindus and Muhammadans It is easily tamed. The red spurfowl is found in jungles all over the District, but is not common and is very shy. The painted partridge is found in all parts of the District, but is not common. It can always be recognised by its peculiar call. This bird is very fond of perching on the palās tree. Its flesh is good. The grey or spurred partridge is found everywhere. It is easily tamed and can frequently be seen in the possession of natives. Its flesh is dry and tasteless and it is a foul feeder. The jungle quail (*Perdicula Asiaticā*) is found in all parts of the District. The large grey quail (*Coturnix communis*) and rain quail (*Coturnix coromandelicus*) are rare. The button quail (*Turnix Dussumierii*) is common. These birds rise only once and have a single note. The large stone plover (*Esacus recurvirostris*), the stone plover or bastard florikin (*Œdicnemus crepitans*), the

spurwinged plover (*Holopterus ventralis*), the eastern golden plover (*Charadrius longipes*), the little ringed plover (*Ægialitis minutus*), the *titehrī* or red-wattled lapwing (*Sarcogrammus Indicus*), the Indian courser (*Cursorius coromandelicus*), the red shank (*Totanus calidris*) and green shank (*Totanus glottis*), the green and blue rock pigeon, and the rufous, spotted, little brown, Indian ring and red doves are other birds, which have been identified in Saugor and probably also exist in Damoh. The great Indian bustard has been seen in Damoh. The *sāras* crane (*Grus antigone*) is very common in all parts of the District, and is usually met with in pairs. It is easily tamed. The common crane (*Grus communis*) is very rare and the demoiselle crane (*Anthropoides Virgo*) does not appear to visit the District.

Duck.

14. Snipe and duck are not so common as in the rice growing Districts of the south and east, but may be shot in a good many places. The grey lag and bar-headed geese are seen but rarely, while the comb duck or black-backed goose (Hind. *nuktā*) is very common and indigenous. This bird is seen only in small flocks, and is rather partial to pools and very slow in its flight. The Brahmini duck, though indigenous is said to be found here only in the season, usually in pairs and on the rivers. The shoveller is rare. Other varieties of immigrant duck are the mallard, and grey duck or gadwall, which are fairly common and the pintail and wigeon, the red-crested pochard, a cousin of the canvasback of America, the red-headed and white-eyed pochards, the tufted or golden-eye all of which are rare, and the smew or white-headed merganser which is very rare. The common teal and blue-winged or ganganey teal are very common in the season and the bronze-capped teal is stated by Dr. Quinn to be common in Damoh. The whistling and cotton-teal are indigenous. Mahseer of small size are found in the rivers, and *murrel* (*Ophiocephalus striatus* and *gachua*) are common in the pools of the Beārma.

Other animals.

15. The *bandar (Macacus rhesus)* the common monkey of Northern India is found in all parts of the District usually on the banks of rivers and streams. This monkey is not regarded as sacred by the Hindus. Dr. Quinn relates that he had a tame female who swallowed half an ounce of cobra venom without any evil effects. The *langūr* or Bengal or grey ape (*Semnopithecus entellus*) is found in all parts of the District. This monkey does not confine itself to rivers and streams, but may be seen in dense jungle away from water. It sometimes attacks the roofs of houses causing great destruction to the tiles. It is also very injurious to the crops, but is not destroyed as it is held sacred. In some parts they are trapped and deported, but it is doubtful whether this is of much use. The common mongoose (*Herpestes mungo*)is common in all parts of the District, easily tamed and very destructive to poultry and snakes. The ruddy mongoose (*Herpestes Smithii*) is very rare but has been seen.

RAINFALL AND CLIMATE.

Rainfall.

16. Rainfall is registered at Damoh and Hattā and at Tejgarh in the hilly country of the south. The average annual rainfall at Damoh for the 35 years ending 1902-03 was 51 inches. The returns of the Meteorological department show it as only 49 inches. The returns of the Hattā and Tejgarh stations are considerably less, that of Hattā being 44 inches, and of Tejgarh 44 to 47 inches, the former figure being given by the Agricultural and the latter by the Meteorological Department. It is doubtful whether the smaller rainfall at Hattā and Tejgarh may not be partly attributed to defective observations. The average rainfall is ample for agricultural purposes, but it is liable to considerable annual fluctuations. A fall of about 40 inches would ordinarily suffice for a good crop, but more depends on its distribution than on the total amount received. The minimum fall registered at Damoh in the 33 years ending 1899-1900 was 22 inches in 1868, which was followed by a scarcity. On the other hand in 1896-97 a fall of 55 inches produced an

almost complete failure of both harvests owing to its bad distribution. In four years (1877, 1878, 1880 and 1899) the average fall was as low as 31 inches, but in two of these years the harvests were not so bad as to cause any distress. In 18 out of 33 years the total has exceeded 50 inches. The maximum fall was 78 inches in 1884-85. Hattā is situated in the middle of the open *havelī* tract and its rainfall is lighter than that of Damoh on the border of the hills. The rainfall at Tejgarh in the hilly country of the south, appears, if the recorded figures are accurate, to be particularly uncertain. During the 33 years ending 1900 the rainfall was less than 33 inches in 10 years, as against only 4 years at Damoh and 6 at Hattā. About 38 inches are received at Damoh during June, July and August, a little over 8 inches in September, 1¾ inches in October, and a little over an inch during November, December and January. The autumn rains of September and October are of supreme importance, but in 15 out of 33 years October was rainless. In seven years during the same period there was no rain in November, December or January. Excessive rain during the cold weather months is very liable to induce rust in the wheat crop. Violent hailstorms are not infrequent about spring-time, and there is a tract towards the north of the District which seems peculiarly liable to them.

Climate.

17. The District has no observatory and no figures of temperature are therefore available. The temperature throughout the year is lower than in the Nerbudda valley generally, and the hot winds are milder and of shorter duration than in Upper India. The nights especially are cool throughout the year. After rain in the winter the climate becomes very cold. Sharp frosts are often experienced at night especially in the hill valleys, and if occurring late in the season while the wheat is in flower, may turn a promising crop into an absolute failure. Crops on lowlying land in the vicinity of rivers are especially liable to damage from frost. The atmosphere is not so damp in the rainy season as at Jubbulpore and Saugor.

CHAPTER II.

HISTORY AND ARCHÆOLOGY.

HISTORY.

Early History.

18. The early history of the District is mainly a matter of deduction from a few remains of buildings or inscriptions. Only for one short period was any place in it the centre of an independent government, when the Gond Rājās of Garhā Mandlā had their headquarters at Singorgarh. In the earliest times the District was probably included in the territories of the Haihaya Rājput dynasty of Kalachurī or Chedi, who ruled the Upper Nerbudda valley from their capital of Tripura, the site of the modern village of Tewar near Jubbulpore. These princes had an era of their own commencing from A. D. 249, and from the 9th to the 12th centuries a genealogy of them has been drawn up, giving the names of 13 kings and occasional details of their marriages or wars. This is the sum of our knowledge of them and after the 13th century the kingdom is heard of no longer[1]. Damoh may have been directly included in the Chedi kingdom or may have been governed in subordination to it by the clan of Pratihār or Parihār Rājputs. An inscription in the old fort of Singorgarh states that it was built by one Gaj Singh Pratihār in A.D. 1307. The Parihārs are believed to have occupied this part of the country even before the Kalachuri kings came into prominence[2], and to have been rendered tributary to them. Ptolemy places the Poruari to the north of Adisathri or Chattīsgarh in their towns of Tholobana, Bidrama, and Malaita ; Cunningham[3] identifies the Poruari with the Parihārs and the three towns mentioned with the modern villages of Bahurıband, Bilahrī and Lametā. Local[4] tradition retains

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1 Cunningham's Archæological Reports, Vol. IX, p. 50.
2 Crooke's Tribes and Castes of the North-Western Provinces, Art. Parihār.
3 Archæological Reports, Vol. IX, p. 57.
4 C. P. Gazetteer, ed. 1871, p. 176.

the memory of the District having been governed from Bilahri, which in its turn remembers a Parihār king Lachhman Sen, who built the still existing tank there called the Lachhman Sāgar[1]. The Parihār Rājputs are still concentrated in the three Northern Districts of Saugor, Damoh and Jubbulpore in the Central Provinces, their headquarters being Nagod State adjoining Jubbulpore District.

The Chandels.

19. Damoh seems subsequently to have been held by the Chandel Rājputs of Mahobā who are recorded to have recovered the fort of Kālinjar in Bundelkhand from the Kalachuri kings during the 11th century[2]. The kingdom of the Chandels extended from the Dhasān river on the west, to the Vindhyā mountains on the east, and from the Jumna on the north to the sources of the Ken river on the south. They traced their descent from Chandramā, the god of the moon. They were defeated in a great battle at Orai by Prithwī Rāj, the famous Chauhān king of Delhi, in 1182 A.D. Chand, who was the court poet of Prithwī Rāj, describes the exploits of the Chandels and especially of the two Banāphar heroes Alhā and Udal who were the generals of the Chandel king. Alhā and Udal are popular heroes of folklore and their 52 battles are celebrated in songs still well known to the people. On his defeat Alhā retired to the forests round Maihar and Orchhā, where like Frederick Barbarossa he is still said to dwell, and nightly to kindle a lamp in the temple of Devī on a hill in the forest. The village of Sākhor near Hattā is traditionally held by the people to have been Alhā's residence. The Chandel Rāj is well remembered and a number of old temples built without cement are attributed to them, but none of these possess any inscriptions. Nohtā is held to have been the seat of government during their supremacy. The Chandels were defeated by the Muhammadans in 1203 A. D., and from this time their dynasty declined in importance, but

[1] Archæological Reports, Vol. IX, p. 35. | [2] Ibid, p. 50.

Durgāvati the famous queen of the Garhā-Mandlā kingdom shortly to be mentioned, is believed to have been a Chandel princess.

The Garhā-Mandlā Kings.

20. After the Chandels the country seems to have fallen into various hands[1]. The most definite local tradition points to the supremacy for a period of the long extinct Gond principality of Khatolā in Bundelkhand, from which the Khatulhā Gonds derive their name. Towards the close of the 15th century the south of the District was conquered by Sangrām Sā, the great Gond king of Garhā-Mandlā, and was governed from Chaurāgarh in the Nerbudda valley. About 1540 A.D. Dalpat Sā, Sangrām Sā's successor, removed the seat of government to the fortress of Singorgarh near Singrāmpur which he enlarged and strengthened, and soon afterwards he died leaving an infant son and his widow, the beautiful Chandel Rājput princess Rānī Durgāvati, as regent. The widowed queen governed the country for 14 years with great skill and prudence, and her name is still remembered among the people. In 1564 the report of her accumulated wealth excited the cupidity of Asaf Khān, the Imperial Governor of Karā Mānikpur, and having obtained Akbar's permission, he invaded her territory at the head of an army. The local story is to the effect that the Mughal Emperor was marching through Durgāvati's territories, and on learning that the kingdom was governed by a woman he sent her a present of a golden spinning-wheel. In return Durgāvati sent him a golden bow like those used by the Pinjārās or male cotton-carders, and this so enraged the king that he at once gave orders for the invasion of the Mandlā territories. Durgāvati met the Imperial army at Singrāmpur 4 miles from Singorgarh, and was defeated. From here she retired to a pass on the Mandlā road, and when she was again defeated put an end to her life by plunging a dagger into her breast.

[1] C. P. Gazetteer, ed. 1871, p. 177.

21. Damoh was then annexed to the Mughal empire and included in the Sūbah of Mālwā. Some Muhammadan incursions had, however, been made into the District at a period two centuries earlier as is evidenced by a Persian inscription formerly placed on one of the gates of the Damoh fort, and which bears the date of 1383 A.D. According to this Damoh was included in the Delhi kingdom of the Tughlak dynasty, but the Muhammadan conquest was at this time merely nominal and no effective occupation took place until two centuries later. The headquarters of the Muhammadans were at Damoh, Narsinghgarh (called by them Nasratgarh) and Lakhronī, and evidences of their presence are still to be found in the ruins of forts, tombs and mosques.[1] The family designated as Kāzīs of Narsinghgarh claim descent from Shāh Taiyab, a general of one of the Imperial armies who defeated the Gonds at that place. They have now fallen very low in the world. The Muhammadans also gave Arabic or Persian names to a number of villages which still retain them.[2]

The Muhammadans.

22. The rule of the Mughals lasted for some ninety years, when the bulk of the Imperial troops had to be withdrawn to oppose the rising power of the Marāthās, and Chhatar Sāl, the Bundelā Rājā of the neighbouring Pannā State, soon afterwards took advantage of the opportunity to eject the remains of the Muhammadan garrisons, and to add Saugor and Damoh to his already extensive territory of Pannā. The Bundelā supremacy lasted only for a period of about sixty years and did not extend to the south of the District, where the small Lodhī and Gond chieftains continued to hold their estates in practical independence. In 1733 Chhatar Sāl[3] was threatened

The Bundelās.

[1] Khān Bahādur Imdād Alī's History of Damoh, p. 19.

[2] *e.g.*, Mirzāpur, Turkai, Shāhpur, Khizarpur, Husenā, Daudpur, Alampura and others.

[3] Chhatar Sal commenced his career when 14 years old and died in 1734 at over 80 years of age.

with an invasion of his kingdom by Muhammad Khān Bangash, the Mughal Sūbahdār of Mālwā, and solicited the aid of Bājī Rao Peshwā to repel it. Assistance was rendered by the Marāthās and the Muhammadans were defeated.

Marāthā rule.

23 Chhatar Sāl was so pleased with the aid afforded by his new ally that he conferred on him a fort and district in the neighbourhood of Jhānsi yielding a revenue of two and a quarter lakhs of rupees, adopted him as his son, and on his death which happened very soon afterwards, bequeathed to him a third of his possessions or an equal share with his own sons Jagat Rai and Hirde Sā. This memorable cession was styled the Tehrā and by it the Districts of Saugor, Jālaun, and part of Damoh fell to the share of Bājī Rao Peshwā, Shāhgarh, Garhākotā and part of Damoh going to Hirde Sā with the title of Rājā of Bundelkhand, and Pannā, Charkhāri, Bijāwar, Jaitpur and part of Damoh to that of Jagat Rai with the title of Rājā of Kālpee. The Marāthās gradually extended their rule over the whole of Damoh either ejecting or reducing to submission the small semi-independent chieftains. Under them Damoh was administered by the governors of Saugor, the first of them being the well-known Govind Rao Pandit, who was killed at Pānīpat in 1760. The administration remained in his family until the cession to the British, when its members received political pensions; the present representative of the family resides at Jubbulpore with the title of Rājā of Saugor. During[1] the Marāthā rule which lasted for about 80 years, the District was administered by two principal and seven subordinate *amils* or *māmlatdārs*. The former were stationed at Damoh and Hattā, and the latter at Narsinghgarh, Patharia, Paterā, Batiāgarh, Tejgarh, Jujhār and Kontā, each of these places being the headquarters of a pargana. The *amils* were all Marāthā Brāhmans, and to each was attached a *farnavīs* or accountant of the same class, and a Kāyasth Kanūngo who

[1] C. P. Gazetteer, ed. 1871, p. 178.

kept the revenue accounts in Hindī. The authority of the *amils* was supported by a military garrison amounting in all to some 1,600 infantry, 400 cavalry and 10 guns ; but the full complement was seldom maintained, though regularly charged for in the annual accounts submitted to Saugor. For the administration of civil and criminal justice no regular agency was kept up. There were, however, several officials styled *chaudharīs* who assisted the governors in *dand māmila ;* that is to say, in regulating the amounts of fines and then negotiating for their realisation. These men were paid by fees on the amounts thus realised. The only punishments recognised by the criminal code were fines for the wealthy, banishment and confiscation of household property for the middle classes, and banishment for the poorer classes. Civil suits were neither brought for hearing nor entertained.

The Cession.

24. In 1817 on the deposition of the Peshwā by Lord Hastings, Damoh with Saugor passed under British rule. The headquarters of the District were at first located at Hattā, and after being transferred more than once were fixed at Damoh in 1838. Up till 1854 the District was administratively subordinate to Saugor.

Outbreak of the Mutiny.

25.[1] On the outbreak of the Mutiny Damoh was garrisoned by two companies of the 42nd Native Infantry. The remainder of this regiment threw off their allegiance at Saugor on June 14th. On the 2nd July a party of the Saugor mutineers approached Damoh with a view to inciting the garrison to mutiny, and to carry off the treasure stored there which amounted to about Rs. 1½ lakhs. The Deputy Commissioner Lieutenant Nembhard and the two European officers of the detachment determined to enter the jail, which was a forti-

[1] The following description of occurrences during the Mutiny is taken from a narrative submitted by Major Erskine, Commissioner of Jubbulpore, to the Secretary to the Government of the North-Western Provinces, No. 368, dated 16th August 1858.

fied building, and to defend it against the rebels. In the afternoon of the 3rd a Havildār of the detachment who had been taking some money to Saugor with an escort, returned and stated that he had come on the mutineers who would be in Damoh the next morning The treasure was then at once sent to the jail. During the evening the Damoh detachment were in a very excited condition and once rushed to their arms, but were quieted by their officer Lieut. Holt. The non-commissioned officers, however, warned the Europeans that the men were not to be depended on, and that if the European officers entered the jail that night they would be murdered. On this the three European officers and Mrs. Holt left the station, taking nothing with them, and rode towards Narsinghpur where they arrived safely after a good deal of hardship. Although, as it turned out, they would have been in no danger if they had stayed, some excuse for their action may be found in the fact that the 52nd at Saugor had mutinied, and there was every reason to suppose that their comrades at Damoh were about to follow their example. Next morning the Saugor mutineers arrived, and proceeding to the jail, demanded the surrender of the treasure, which was refused by the Sūbahdār Major and Ranjit Singh, Havildār. The cavalry are said to have searched for the European officers, but not finding them, and seeing that the native officers were resolute in holding the jail, the whole party left the station and, though they plundered some villages, did no harm in Damoh.

Disturbed state of the District.

26. The rebel Rājās of Bānpur and Shāhgarh now sent emissaries to all the petty chiefs of the District urging them to throw off their allegiance, and nearly every Lodhi landholder became disaffected except the petty Rājā of Hatri. By the end of July the District was full of rebels, some of whom came from Charkhāri State. At this time Captain Pinkney with two companies of infantry and two guns arrived at Damoh and took over the jail and treasure which

had been faithfully held by the 42nd. An attack was then made on Hindoria, the walled village of the rebel Lodhī landholder Kishore Singh who had menaced Damoh, and a number of the enemy were killed, though the place was not taken. On the 25th July the Deputy Commissioner and European officers who had left the station returned in obedience to orders, and subsequently to this the small garrison had several engagements with the rebels. By the middle of August the whole of the interior of Saugor and Damoh were in revolt, the British retaining only the two headquarter stations. All the police had deserted or been driven in and hundreds of landowners, though well disposed, were forced either to join the rebels or to assist them with men and food, and were plundered and often tortured until they complied. Urgent requisitions were sent to Jubbulpore for help, and on the 24th August the Nāgpur moveable column arrived at Damoh preceded by two companies of the 52nd Native Infantry who belonged to Jubbulpore. Shortly afterwards Bālākote was taken and a small fort destroyed, and subsequently the fortified house of Kishore Singh at Hindoria was attacked and taken. In the meantime a plot to murder the Europeans at Jubbulpore was discovered, and a part of the moveable column was recalled, while at the same time the General commanding at Saugor ordered the detachment from there to return with the two companies of the 42nd. This left only two companies at Damoh which was again threatened by the rebels, when it was relieved by the remainder of the moveable column which had gone part of the way to Saugor with the Damoh treasure, but had turned back. On the 17th September the fort of Narsinghgarh was taken and 50 rebels killed. In the meantime the 52nd Native Infantry at Jubbulpore had mutinied and left the station, and news was received that the two companies at Damoh could not be trusted. On their return from the Narsinghgarh expedition, therefore, they were disarmed as a precautionary measure.

Occupation of Damoh by Pannā troops.

27. It was now resolved that the force available was not strong enough to hold both Damoh and Jubbulpore. The Rājā of Pannā had made repeated requests to be allowed to assist the British, and in August his brother-in-law, Kunwar Shyāmleju, had cleared the Semaria tract of the rebel Rānī of Jaitpur's troops and had occupied the town and tahsīl of Hattā. He was now asked to occupy Damoh on behalf of the British, and on his complying, the two remaining companies of the Saugor detachment returned there, and the Nāgpur moveable column marched towards Jubbulpore with the Damoh treasure towards the end of September. On the 27th the column met the mutineers of the 52nd Infantry at the crossing of the Hiran river near Gobrā and Katangī, and after desultory jungle fighting for eight hours drove them off with a loss of about 100, the British casualties being 5.

Plundering of Damoh.

28. The mutineers of the 52nd joined by Kishore Singh of Hindoria and other rebels from the District, marched to Damoh and attacked and defeated the Pannā troops. They then proceeded to the jail, which was gallantly defended by the jail guard. On their ammunition being exhausted, however, and being attacked simultaneously by the prisoners, the guard could not hold out and the mutineers entering the jail slaughtered them nearly to a man. The rebels then plundered the town of Damoh, burned the records and public buildings and blew up the court-house. They sacked the Deputy Commissioner's house, but did not burn it down, probably because it belonged to a native. After a stay of some days at Damoh the rebels marched off to join the Shāhgarh levies at Garhākotā, and a few days afterwards the Pannā troops being reinforced returned to Damoh, and held it until Kunwar Shyāmleju made over charge of the District to the British in March 1858. The remainder of the District remained in a disaffected condition until a strong column under General

Whitlock marched through it in March 1858, after which order was rapidly restored. The peace of the District has not since been disturbed.

ARCHÆOLOGY.

29.[1] The oldest remains in the District are probably the two flat-roofed Vaishnava temples near the Vardhamāna tank at the foot of the Kundalpur hill. From their style of architecture they may be referred to the late Gupta period or about the 6th century. Next in point of antiquity come the *satī* pillars, one of which at Hindoria bears the date 1056 A.D. Most of these are found in Hattā, Hindoria and Batiāgarh, and belong to different castes and periods from the 11th century to the present day. Mediæval Brahmanic temples of the period between the 8th and 13th centuries, but now generally in ruins, exist at Nohtā, Badgaon, Kanodā, Koral, Raneh and Sākhor. At Nohtā there are numerous remains of temples both Hindu and Jain, but they have been almost entirely destroyed and the stone used for building. A number of old temples built without mortar are attributed to the Chandel dynasty which was probably dominant in Damoh during the 12th and 13th centuries. Of the forts the most important is that of Singorgarh near Singrāmpur, which according to an inscription found in it was probably constructed by the Parihār Rājputs in the 14th century, and was afterwards greatly enlarged and strengthened by the Gonds. It must have been of immense size, as the remains of the outer circumvallation are still most extensive. Of the inner fort little remains but a solitary tower and some ruined stone reservoirs. Two smaller towers still stand on neighbouring hills. There are a number of other forts nearly all of which are in ruins; those at Hattā, Jatāshankar, Kanodā, Mariādoh, Panchamnagar, Rājnagar and Rāngir are ascribed to the Bundelās,

Archæology.

[1] Reference may also be made to the Gazetteer articles in the Appendix on several of the places mentioned below.

and those of Ghugrā Kalān, Kerbanā, Rāmnagar, Hindoriā and Tejgarh to the Lodhis. The Gonds are said to have built the forts at Hattā and Kotā. The remains of Muhammadan forts, mosques and tombs exist at Damoh, Narsinghgarh, Batiāgarh and Harāt. The remains of a stone wall may be seen at intervals extending along the north of the District and linking up breaks in the chains of hills. This is supposed to have been constructed by the Bundelās, apparently for the defence of the northern portion of their territory. *At Kundalpur are situated a collection of 50 or more Jain temples, covering a hill and gleaming white in the distance.* This is a well-known sacred place of the Jains, and has an annual fair, formerly of great importance, which after remaining in abeyance for a time has lately been revived. Bāndakpur is the site of a famous temple of Mahādeo to which pilgrims come from as far even as Lahore. Two annual fairs are held here.

CHAPTER II.

POPULATION

STATISTICS OF POPULATION.

Area and population, density, towns and villages.

30. The area and population of the District in 1901 were 2,831 square miles and 285,326 persons respectively. Since the census 15 square miles of Government forest have been transferred to Narsinghpur and the area has thus been reduced to 2,816 square miles. In 1901 Damoh was the smallest but two of the 18 Districts of the Central Provinces in respect of area, and the smallest in population. Of the two tahsīls Damoh has an area of 1,797 square miles and a population of 183,316 persons and Hattā an area of 1,019 square miles and a population of 102,010 persons. The Damoh tahsīl contains nearly two-thirds of the total area and population. The density of population was 101 persons per square mile in 1901 as against 115 in 1891. The Damoh and Patharia Station-house areas are the most densely populated with 205 and 204 persons per square mile in the open country, and next to these come Sītānagar and Tejgarh. The hilly country of the south is the most sparsely populated with less than 100 persons per square mile, excluding the area of Government forest. In 1891 the proportion of population to cultivated area in Damoh was higher than in any except the rice-growing Districts. The District has one town Damoh and 1,116 inhabited villages according to the census. In the village lists a total of 1,408 towns and villages is shown, of which 1,099 were inhabited and 309 uninhabited. The number of uninhabited villages increased by 15 between 1891 and 1901. Forest and ryotwāri villages are included in the above total. The population of Damoh town in 1901 was 13,355 persons, and the urban population was 4½ per cent of the total. Besides Damoh, five other villages contained over 2,000 persons in 1901, these

being Hattā (4,365), Hindoria (3,096), Patharia (2,667), Bānsa (2,220), and Raneh (2,065), and 26 villages contained between 1,000 and 2,000 persons. 682 villages or 61 per cent of the total number contained less than 200 persons in 1901. This proportion of small villages was only exceeded in Saugor, Mandlā, Chānda, and Chhindwāra. The average number of occupied houses to a village in 1901 was 60 and of persons 255.

Nature of villages

31. The villages generally stand on rising ground clustering round the house of the *māl-guzār* or village proprietor which is frequently double-storied, not built on any regular plan, but intersected by crooked lanes and alleys. The majority of the houses are tiled. In the south a typical village is perched on a rocky spur of the hills overlooking a group of well-tilled fields in the narrow and fertile valley beneath it. Tanks are rare and the water-supply is usually obtained from wells or streams. As in other Districts the names of villages are frequently derived from those of trees. Such are *Amkherā, Anghāt, Amkhiria* from the mango, *Bāmora* from the *babūl, Chheolā* from the *chheolā* or *palās, Sagonī* from the teak tree, and *Tendūkhedā* from the *tendū* tree. Other names are *Bhainsā*, the village of the buffaloes, *Hāthīdol,* the elephant's pool, *Sārasbagali,* the village of the cranes and baglās (a shore bird), *Patharia,* the stony village, *Kanāri, i.e.*, a vessel for storing grain or water, *Nonpāni*, the village with salt water, *Chor Khamaria,* Khamaria of the thieves, *Sujānpurā*, a village of wise persons, *Buhtarai*, the village with many tanks, and so on.

Growth of population.

32. A census of the District has now been taken on five occasions. In 1866, the population was 262,641 persons. In 1869, 123 villages including the Singrāmpur pargana were transferred from Jubbulpore to Damoh. At the next census in 1872 the population was returned as 269,642 persons. On the old area of the District this was equivalent to a

decrease of 5 per cent, the result of the famine of 1868-69 in which Damoh was somewhat severely affected. It is recorded that there was considerable emigration to Saugor where the failure of crops was not so severe. At the third census in 1881 the population increased to 312,957 persons or by 16 per cent on the figure of 1872. The returns of vital statistics showed an increase of 7½ per cent only. The increase was attributed to immigration from Bundelkhand where there had been considerable distress in 1877-78. The census of 1872 was also probably inaccurate, and the real population larger than was recorded. In 1891 the population enumerated was 325,613 persons, an increase of only 4 per cent on 1881. The second part of the decade was marked by some seasons of slight scarcity and high prices culminating in a very unhealthy year in 1889. During the last five years of the decade, the number of deaths exceeded that of births. The increase deduced from vital statistics during the intercensal period was 4·8 per cent. It was considered that the District had lost by a large temporary migration of labourers to Jubbulpore for the wheat harvest. An increase of 32 square miles in the area of the District during the decade was due to the correction of the survey. In 1901 the population was 285,326 persons, a decrease of 12·4 per cent on that of 1891. During the decade the District was one of those most severely affected by successive scarcities and famines; the number of deaths exceeded that of births in 1891, and in every year between 1894 and 1898. In 1896 and 1897 the number of deaths was more than four times that of births. The decrease in the Damoh tahsīl was 7 per cent as against 21 per cent in the Hattā tahsīl. One possible reason for this is that the influx of labourers into Jubbulpore from the Damoh tahsīl for cutting the wheat crop had not taken place at the time of the census as the harvest was very late. The increase in the population of Damoh town and the opening of the railway may also have induced some emigration from Hattā to Damoh. The Damoh tahsil has also a considerably larger area under

autumn crops which on the whole fared better during the decade than the spring crops. The excess of deaths over births during the decade was over 33,000 and the census population was 7,000 less than that deduced from vital statistics. This difference, which is not very large, must be attributed to the deficient reporting of deaths in famine years.

Migration.

33. There is little to remark on in the figures of migration. Nearly nine-tenths of the population in 1901 were born in Damoh. Of the immigrants amounting to nearly 34,000, 13,000 came from Saugor, 5,000 from Jubbulpore, over 12,000 from the Bundelkhand States, and 1,600 from the United Provinces. Of 23,000 emigrants from Damoh enumerated in other Districts of the Province, 10,000 resided in Saugor and 10,000 in Jubbulpore. Immigration and emigration take place then with the adjoining Districts of Saugor and Jubbulpore and the Bundelkhand States and not to any appreciable extent from or to other parts of India.

Vital statistics.

34 Between 1881 and 1891 the birth-rate averaged 43 per mille and was the second highest in the Province, and the death-rate was 38·3 per mille or the third highest. These figures are very similar to those of Saugor, and the only conclusion which it appears possible to draw from them is that the registration of vital statistics was at this period more accurate in the Vindhyan Districts than elsewhere, the actual numbers of both births and deaths reported in the Province as a whole being substantially below the rates deduced as normal from actuarial calculations. During the decade ending 1901 the birth-rate was 32·8 per mille or lower than in any Districts except Saugor and Bālāghāt, while the death-rate was 43 per mille, a figure which was exceeded in five other Districts. No general conclusions can be drawn from these results which are to be attributed to the prevalence of scarcity and famine.

Diseases.

35. As regards diseases the remarks made by Major Sutherland, I.M.S., for the adjoining District of Saugor may be quoted as being also applicable to Damoh. 'The effects of the meteo-'rological conditions on the health of the people are direct and 'indirect. When the high temperature and extreme dryness 'of the hot weather suddenly give place to the lower tempera-'ture and excessive humidity of the rainy season, the people 'are prone to congestion of the abdominal organs resulting in 'bowel diseases. This is more especially evident in years 'of distress when their stomachs have been weakened by pri-'vation, the result being that the death-rate rises with a bound 'as soon as the rains have set in. Later, when the anopheles 'mosquitoes have had time to breed in the pools, there is a 'marked increase in the number of fever cases. As in the 'case of bowel diseases, the mortality from fever is always 'excessive in years of distress. In the cold weather the 'people tend to crowd together in tightly closed apartments, 'and ill-adapted as their clothing is to the sudden and excessive 'variations of temperature, they are subject to diseases of the 'respiratory passages. In the hot weather owing to the pollu-'tion of the water-supply inflammatory diarrhœa is prevalent, 'changing to cholera if the germ should happen to be imported. 'The dust which lies so thickly everywhere in the hot 'weather, and rises in clouds as men and cattle pass along the 'roads is a fruitful cause of eye disorders. The second part 'of the year is the most unhealthy and particularly the 'months of August, September and October.'

Cholera.

36. Epidemics of cholera are comparatively infrequent as compared with other parts of the Province, but it has never been absent for more than three or four years together. The worst epidemics occurred in 1869, 1882, 1887, 1889, 1891, 1896, and 1897. In three at least of these years distress or famine was prevalent. The highest number of deaths recorded from the disease was 3,169 in 1869, and the next

highest 3,018 in 1896, this being equivalent to a rate of 10 per mille.

Small-pox.

37. Small-pox has never been entirely absent from the District since 1867, but in 1891 only one and in 1899 only two deaths were due to it. The worst epidemic recorded was in 1869 with 3,590 deaths, and that next in severity occurred in 1875 with 2,919 deaths. In seven other years the number of deaths has exceeded 400. The mortality from this disease is, however, rapidly declining with increased efficiency in vaccination, the average number of deaths reported annually during the decade 1891—1901 having been only 82, as against 215 for the period 1881—1891.

Fever.

38. Deaths from fever usually amount to from half to two-thirds of the total number reported, while the highest figures have been recorded in the famine years. The largest mortality recorded was in 1896 when the number of deaths was 18,921 or at the rate of 62 per mille, and the next largest in 1897 with 12,320 deaths or a rate of 43 per mille. The average annual number of deaths for the decade ending 1891 was 6,200 and for that ending 1901, 8,990. In the reports of vital statistics, however, fever includes a variety of diseases which are imperfectly diagnosed, and of which it is an accompanying symptom.

Bowel-complaints.

39. The mortality from bowel-complaints is usually from 3 to 5 per mille per annum. The average annual number of deaths for the decade ending 1891 was 1,185 and for the next decennial period 1,256.

Other diseases.

40. A considerable number of cases of incurable paralysis have resulted from the consumption of *tiurā* (*Lathyrus sativus*) during the famines. This disease has appeared on previous occasions as a concomitant of famine, being noticed by Sleeman in "Rambles and Recollections" in the early part of the 19th century. Compared with the Province as a whole

leprosy is very rare in Damoh and has always been so, though during the last decade (ending 1901) lepers having especially weak lives, and often being unable to support themselves, would have been liable to succumb more rapidly to privation than others. In 1901 the District contained only 37 lepers, 26 males and 11 females. The principal form of the disease met with is the tubercular. Blindness on the other hand is very prevalent, the figures being 19 males and 31 females in 10,000 of each sex, as against the provincial figures of 13 and 18 respectively. The tendency to the seclusion of women and to passing much time indoors in a smoky atmosphere on account of the coldness of the climate may perhaps be assigned as reasons for the prevalence of blindness. The proportion of insane persons is the lowest in the Province, the total number of lunatics in the District being only 24 in 1901. Deaf-mutism is rather common.

Guinea-worm.

41. The disease of guinea-worm is endemic in the District, and is much dreaded by the people. It appears to be more common in Damoh town than in the interior, but is found all over the District. Some families in Damoh are constitutionally liable to it, while others have always been immune. It scarcely ever attacks Europeans. The disease is most prevalent at the beginning of the rains. The worms sometimes appear in the eye or nose, but more frequently on the body below the neck. If properly treated the disease disappears in a month or two. It is popularly supposed that to drink water containing fibres of cotton gives rise to guinea-worm. But this belief is obviously based on the principle of imitative magic, or the resemblance of the cotton-fibres to the worm.

Plague.

42. The first serious outbreak of plague occurred in 1903, when an epidemic occurred in Damoh town with a few cases in the interior. The total number of deaths was 214 of which 200 occurred in the town. The disease was imported from Jubbulpore. Damoh was practically evacuated for some time.

Language. Bundelī.

43 The language of the District is the Bundelkhandī or Bundelī dialect of Western Hindī, which is spoken by over 99 per cent of the population. Bundelī differs from Urdū in some points of inflection. In Bundelī the long *a* forming the termination of substantives and adjectives is changed into *o* as *ghoro* for *ghorā; Jatāshankar ko kilo purāno hai* for *Jatāshankar kā kilā purāna hai.* The change is also made in the participial form of verbs as *khao* for *khāya.* Another tendency is to leave out the aspirate if it is not the initial letter of a word; thus *pahilā* first would be *pailā, gahirā* deep, *gairā, lahar* wave, *lair*, and so on. The *ko* of the oblique case is also changed to *e*, as *tum bazāre gaye hate,* for *tum bazār ko gaye the.* If the root of a verb ends in a long *a* it is changed into *ai* to form the verbal noun, as *khaibo* for *khāna.* In the future the termination *ga* is not used in Bundelī, and the Gujarāti termination *shai* altered into *hai* is substituted, as *u karhai* for *wah karegā.* The past tense of the substantive verb *thā, the* is changed to *hato, hate*, and the long *a* in the termination of the participle is shortened, as for instance *wah jāta thā* would become *ū jāt hato.* In Bundelī as in Urdū the particle *ne* is added to the nominative to transitive verbs in the past tenses, and in this respect it differs from Western Hindī. Bundelī has a small literature dating from the time of Chhatar Sāl of Pannā and his immediate predecessors and successors of the early part of the 18th century.

Other languages.

44. No other language is spoken by as many as five hundred persons. Urdū is the language of a few Muhammadans and Kāyasths in towns, Marāthī of some of the Marāthā Brāhmans and Gujarāti of the Khedīwāl Brāhmans. But all these languages are much mixed with Bundelī. The Gonds have almost entirely abandoned their own language and talk a broken Bundelī, which the people of the District call Gondī, the Gond language proper being known as Pārsi.

45. The District has no mining or factory industries. The proportion of the population supported by pasture and agriculture is 67 per cent of the total as against an average of 72 per cent for British Districts. This low proportion is to be explained by the fact that Damoh like the other Northern Districts has, though to a smaller extent, a large number of persons engaged in personal service, and also that the village artisans and servants are more numerous than in other parts of the Province. As in the other Northern Districts social life in the interior is somewhat more developed, and agriculturists get work done for them by the hereditary village servants which elsewhere they do for themselves. The number of persons supported by personal service is about 11,000 and the proportion of servants to the total population is exceeded only in Saugor, Jubbulpore, Narsinghpur and Hoshangābād. Barbers, washermen and water-carriers are the most numerous of this class. The number of persons supported by the preparation of articles of food and drink is also fairly large, being nearly 16,000 or 5½ per cent of the population. The principal classes among these are sellers of milk and *ghī* (clarified butter), grain and pulse-dealers, oil-pressers and sellers, vegetable and fruit sellers and salt sellers. The number of betel-leaf sellers (931) is exceeded only in three other Districts. The cultivation of the betel-vine is an important item of the subsidiary branches of agriculture in Damoh. The cotton industry on the other hand is numerically the weakest in the Province, supporting in all only some 5,000 persons. The number of leather-workers (9,500) is exceeded only in three other Districts and in proportion to the population is the highest in the Province. Shoes are universally worn in Saugor and Damoh and the Saugor or Bundelkhandi shoe is a much more elaborately made and finished article than those worn elsewhere. The pottery industry supporting about 3,000 persons is also proportionately the second strongest in the Province, being

Occupation.

exceeded only by Jubbulpore, though it has seriously declined during the last decade. Damoh pottery has a local reputation. Makers of baskets and mats, and hide and bone-dealers are also comparatively numerous.

RELIGION.

General Statistics. Hindus and Animists.

46. The figures of religion show that Hindus constitute 85 per cent of the population, Animists 9 per cent, Muhammadans 3 per cent and Jains 2 per cent. The proportion of professed Animists is low in Damoh as compared with other Districts, the forest tribes being found in small numbers and having generally attained to some degree of civilisation. There is nothing peculiar about the local Hindus, their religion being of the same rural and animistic type as in the rest of the Province.

Village gods.

47. There are a number of village gods to whom all classes of the population pay reverence, and the principal of whom are the following:—*Khedāpati* or *Khermāta* is the tutelary goddess of the earth or the village. Her shrine consists of a stone placed on a platform and it is worshipped twice a year at sowing time and harvest. While the spring crops are in the ground a plough is sometimes buried upside down in front of *Khedāpati's* shrine, and is taken out when the crops are cut, and the goddess is worshipped. This is no doubt meant in some way to concentrate her attention on her duty of making the crops grow. On the boundary of every village there is a tree or stone which is worshipped as *Miroi Deo*, the god of boundaries; adoration is paid to him when sickness breaks out in the village, small flags being placed on his shrine and goats offered to him. *Pauria Bābā* is the ghost of some forgotten Rājput warrior, and lives in the entrance gate or *paur* of forts. He is a jealous god and a case is quoted of his having made a bridegroom ill because he did not worship *Pauria* before his wedding. *Ghatoia Deo* lives in the fords of rivers and Dhimars especially pay him

reverence. His shrine is near the place where the boats are tied up, and ferry-contractors keep a live chicken in their ferry-boat to be offered to *Ghatoia* on the first occasion that the river is sufficiently in flood to be crossed by ferry after the breaking of the rains.

Village gods (continued).

48. *Masān Bābā* is the god of the Telis, and is supposed to be the ghost of a Teli boy. He is a boy about 3 feet in height, black-coloured with a long black scalp-lock. Some Telis have *Masān Bābā* in their possession, and when they are turning the oil-press they set him on top of it, and he makes the bullocks go on working so that the master can go away and leave the press. But in order to prevent him getting into mischief a cake of flour mixed with human hair must be placed in front of the press; he will eat this but will first pick out all the hairs one by one, and this will occupy him the whole night; but if no cake is put for him, he will eat all the food in the house. A Teli who has not got *Masān* must go to one who has and hire him for Rs. 1-4-0 a night. Then they both go to the owner's oil-press and the hirer says "I have hired you for to-night," and the owner says "Yes, I have let you for to-night"; and then the hirer goes away and *Masān Bābā* follows him and will turn the oil-press all night. A Teli who has not got *Masān Bābā*, puts a stone on the oil-press and then the *beil* thinks that his master *Masān* is sitting on it, and will go on turning the press; but this is not so good as having *Masān Bābā*. Some say that he will repay his hirer the sum of Rs. 1-4-0 by stealing something during the year and giving it to him.

Village gods (continued).

49. *Nat Bābā* is the ghost of a *Nat* who is supposed to have fallen from a tight-rope and been killed. He is generally worshipped by Ahīrs. *Raksā* or *Chhīd* is an imp who lives in the woods and sometimes takes the shape of a dog or a cow and comes and worries people. Offerings are made to him at some special spot in the forest. *Marhai Devī* is the

goddess of cholera, and when there is an epidemic of cholera the lower castes take a bottle of liquor and sprinkle it all round the village, and then sacrifice a pig, and let loose a chicken to wander away and take the disease with it. *Hardaul* is in every village. He is the ghost of a young Rājput prince, whom his brother murdered because he suspected him of loving his wife. He has a square platform outside the village with steps leading up to it on each side, and is always worshipped before the celebration of weddings, a cocoanut and a clay model of a horse being offered to him. *Dūlha Deo* also has a platform outside the village carrying a representation of a man on horseback. He is supposed to be the ghost of a young bridegroom who was carried off by a tiger on his way to his wedding. He is worshipped before marriages like *Hardaul*, and oil and turmeric are offered to him before they are rubbed on the bride and bridegroom. When the ceremony is over the bride and bridegroom offer him a cocoanut and flowers. *Nāg Bābā* is the cobra and is worshipped on Nāg Panchamī or the 5th day of the light fortnight of Shrāwan (July-August). He is represented by the image of a snake carved on a stone and painted with vermilion. In Hattā and some other villages every house in the village must send a man on one day in the month of Shrāwan who will go to *Nāg Bābā's* shrine and eat cakes there and come back. If this ceremony is not duly performed the people of the house will probably get bitten by cobras. *Guraiyā Bābā* is especially worshipped by the Ahīrs on the day of Diwāli. His shrine is located in the *Khirkā* or the place where the cattle stand in the morning before they are driven to the forest. He is offered a cocoanut and flowers, turmeric and rice. *Mahābīr* or *Hanumān* is in every village and has a shrine with a slab of stone carrying the image of a man carved in half-relief and covered with vermilion; he is worshipped on Tuesdays and Saturdays, and cocoanuts, vermilion and flowers are offered to him. Some give him *malīda* or cakes boiled in melted butter and mixed with sugar.

50. Among the religious festivals more commonly observed the following may be noticed:—The *Haraitā* ceremony marks the beginning of the agricultural year, and is performed on the third day of the second fortnight of Baisākh (April-May). The cattle and plough are cleaned and turmeric is applied to them, and the tenants then take them to the fields accompanied by the Basors playing their instruments. A basket filled with a mixture of all the autumn grains is also taken and these are placed on the field and covered with cowdung. They are worshipped by the Brāhman and water, rice and turmeric are sprinkled over them. Then the tenants drive a few furrows, and go back to the village where *ghungrī* or boiled gram and wheat and *batāshas* or balls of sugar are distributed. On the 11th day of the second fortnight of Asārh (June-July) the gods are believed to go to sleep, and food is offered to them. They wake up on the corresponding day of Kārtik four months afterwards, and are again fed and worshipped. No marriages may take place among Hindus during this period, and it is also the one during which the majority of festivals occur, especially those connected with fasting. It corresponds to the period when the autumn crops are in the ground, and a similar sort of belief has been found in many other countries. The Greek myth by which Proserpine, the daughter of Ceres was supposed to spend part of the year under ground as the bride of Plutus is of precisely the same character.

Festivals. Haraitā.

51. On the last eight days of Shrāwan (July-August) the *bhujarias* are grown. Some grains of barley are sown in a pot of earth and manure and are allowed to grow for eight days, when they rapidly shoot up into yellowish-green stalks. On the first day of Bhādon (August-September) the pots are taken in procession to a tank and thrown in, and the stalks are then distributed to friends as a mark of amity. The same sort of thing is done on two other

Bhujarias and Jawāras.

occasions in the year, that is, on the first nine days of the second or light fortnight of the months of Kunwār (September-October), and Chait (March-April). These two periods of 9 days are called the Nao-Durgā or the 9 days of Devī. The pots of grain sown are called *jawāras*. They must be placed in a special room newly cleaned and whitewashed, where a lamp is kept burning day and night, and are tended and watered by one of the male members of the family who eats no grain during this period but only milk or *singhāra* (waternut). The man who sows the *jawāras* is called the Pandā. Sometimes the village Pandā or priest of the village gods is hired to sow them. During these 9 days songs are sung nightly in honour of Devī, who during the Kunwār period is supposed to have been engaged in conflict with the demon Bhainsāsur or the buffalo. On the 9th day the pots are taken in procession to the tank and thrown in and the Pandās pierce their cheeks with large iron needles, and it is said that no pain is felt and no blood flows. The procession is preceded by a company singing songs and playing on drums and cymbals.

Other festivals.

52. During Shrāwan swinging and walking on stilts are practised as amusements, the idea being probably to make the crops grow as high as the stilts or swing. Another game practised in Shrāwan and bearing some resemblance to the May-day celebrations of Europe as described by Mr. Frazer in 'The Golden Bough,' is called Māhulia. Children, especially girls, take a dried twig of a thorny tree like the *babūl* (*Acacia arabica*) or *ber* (*Zizyphus Jujuba*) and tie flowers on to it, and carry it round the village singing songs. It is then taken to a river and thrown in and slices of cucumber are distributed among the children. After they have thrown the "Māhulia" into the river the children must run home without looking behind them, or it is said that the *bhūts* (evil spirits) will catch them. During Shrāwan also children and young women crush green leaves of the *menhdī* or henna plant on their

hands and feet, the sap giving them a red dye. *Tīja* is another women's festival observed on the third day of the light fortnight of Bhādon (August-September). Married women observe it and fast for a day and a night singing songs in honour of Mahādeo and Pārvati. This is supposed to save them from widowhood. *Harchhat* is another festival of the same sort coming three days after *Tīja*. On this day nothing must be eaten which has been grown by cultivation, but only food which has grown wild. The milk and *ghī* of buffaloes may be used. The observance of this festival is supposed to secure the welfare of children. Another festival called *Santān Sāten* is observed on the following day or the 7th of Baisākh Sudī. The meaning of the words is "The seventh day of the children", and the mother fasts in order to secure long life for her children.

Dasahrā and Diwāli.

53. The Dasahrā is celebrated on the 10th day of the light fortnight of Kunwār (September-October), after the sowing of the Jawāras during the first 9 days. It is in celebration of the victory of Rāma over Rāwan the demon king of Ceylon, and representations are given of the contest and victory. According to a more primitive story the victory of Devī over the demon Bhainsāsur or the buffalo took place on the same day. People go out to see the *nīlkanth* or blue-jay which is a very lucky bird, and distribute to each other the leaves of the *kachnār* tree (*Bauhinia variegata*) in representation of pieces of gold. The Diwāli is on the 15th day of the dark or first fortnight of Kārtik (October-November), 20 days after Dasahrā. Houses are whitewashed and raw earthen lamps are lighted. Children let off fireworks and crackers, and the Baniās close their account books and open new ones, which they worship. No loan must be made on this day. All classes gamble for three days. The cattle are worshipped and given salt and are not yoked on that day and the herdsmen go to the tenants' houses and receive a small present.

Holī.

54. Holī is celebrated on the last day of Phāgun (February-March). A great bonfire is made, the ashes of which are considered to be very efficacious in keeping off evil spirits, and in curing scorpion stings when rubbed on the part affected. A favourite amusement at the Holī is the 'Rāee' or dance of the dancing-girls or Bernis. The girl dances the whole night and is supported by musicians who sing and play drums and cymbals. The girl gets a rupee from the man who gives the entertainment, and each spectator gives her a pice or two. Special obscene songs are sung at this time called 'Phāgen' as they are sung only in Phāgun. The dance may be held on any other day in this month besides the Holī.

Sects of Hindus. Kabīrpanthīs.

55. Among special sects or orders of Hindus the following only need be mentioned. Three thousand five hundred and seventeen persons returned themselves as Kabīrpanthīs[1] in 1901. They are mainly Korīs or weavers and their adhesion to the sect is little more than nominal. Their only distinguishing mark is the *kanthī* or necklace of *tulsī* beads which they wear round the neck. Their salutation among themselves is *Sat Sāhib*, but to other Hindus they say *Rām Rām*. They observe caste and neither bury their dead nor are vegetarians like true Kabīrpanthīs.

Dhâmis.

56. The Dhāmis are a small sect who are followers of a *gurū* or teacher named Prānnāth. Prānnāth came from Gujarāt and lived at Pannā in the time of Chhatar Sāl in the 18th century. He was a Hindu but was versed in Muhammadan learning and attempted to reconcile the two religions. His tenets included the abolition of caste, vegetarianism, and the abstention from the worship of idols. There is a richly endowed temple of the Dhāmis at Pannā, where the sacred book of the founder, called *Kulzam Sarūp* and written in Gujarāti, is kept

[1] For a fuller description of the Kabīrpanthīs see the Census Reports of 1891 and 1901 and the Bilāspur District Gazetteer (not yet published).

on an altar and worshipped daily by waving a lamp over it. This temple is also visited and worshipped by Bhātias, and Cutchīs who come from Gujarāt, and many of whom follow this sect, and also by Nepālis ; the preaching of the doctrines of the sect has apparently been carried as far as Nepāl, as it is reported that followers of Prānnāth are to be found there. The Dhāmis bury their dead and do not observe mourning, nor do they keep the Hindu festivals, with the exception of the Janamashtamī or birthday of Krishna which they celebrate with great pomp. Most of them now observe caste.

Aghorīs.

57. The Aghorīs are a small and abominable sect of mendicants a few of whom are found in Damoh. Their theory is that everything in the world is of the same material and equally good. In pursuance of this theory, however, they adopt the most degrading practices, carrying a human skull as a begging bowl, and wearing a necklace of bones round their necks. They eat ordure and carrion and when a man will not give them alms they throw filth into his house. They wear red and black lines painted on their foreheads.

Muhammadans.

58. Muhammadans numbered 9,000 persons in 1901, of whom over 2,000 lived in the town of Damoh. They own about 80 villages in the District, the bulk of which are comprised in the important Māla estate conferred on a Muhammadan family for services in the Mutiny. A number of Muhammadans are Bahnās or cotton-carders who in their religious observances are practically Hindus, though a few living in towns have begun again to conform to Islām. Damoh contains a number of Fakīrs or Muhammadan beggars who are divided into two sects, the Madāriyas and Dhapalias. The Madāriyas are so named after their founder one Madār or Badrud Dīn who lived in Persia, while the Dhapalias take their name from the *dhapalī* or drum which they carry about strapped to their bodies. They also have a circular piece of wood round their waist carved like a horse's head in front. Both classes beg from Hindus.

59. With the exception of Saugor, Damoh contains a larger number of Jains[1] than any District in the Province. There are about 7,000 of them in all. As in Saugor the Parwār Baniās are an influential class of Jain money-lenders. The principal men enjoy the title of 'Singhai', 'Sawai Singhai' or 'Seth', won by giving large entertainments to their fellow castemen, a separate set of festivities being required for each rise in grade. Thousands of Parwārs flock to these entertainments which are known as *raths*, a leading feature in the celebration being a large wooden elephant car (*rath*), in which the donor and his family are carried along in triumph round a raised platform with a pillar on it erected for the purpose. If the elephants refuse to march properly, the title earned by the host is modified by the word *Kadhore* which signifies that the chariot had to be dragged by hand when the elephants went wrong. The Chārnāgars are a special sect of Jains found in Damoh, and are the disciples of Taran-Swāmi, one of the 24 Tirthankars or saints. Unlike Jains they worship their sacred books or Shāstras, and have no idols. They have temples at Tejgarh and Rāmgarh. They do not have the *rath* festival, but get the title of Seth by building a *Chityāla* (temple) in which the sacred book is placed, and the occasion taken for a feast to the brethren. Their temples have no *kalas* or pinnacle.

Jains.

60. In 1901 Christians numbered 90, of whom 22 were Europeans, 9 Eurasians and 59 Native Christians. The majority of these were wrongly classed as Presbyterians at the census, and are really the converts of the American Unsectarian Mission known as 'The Disciples of Christ.' This body has a station at Damoh established in 1894 with about eight European or American missionaries, and an out-station at Hattā opened in 1902. It maintains a women's hospital and dispensary at Damoh, a vernacular middle school and some elementary village schools, and a large orphanage combined with a farm

Christians.

[1] See the Saugor District Gazetteer for some discription of the Jain religion.

and industrial school for boys. Damoh is in the Anglican Diocese of Nāgpur and is visited by a travelling Chaplain from Saugor. It is in the Roman Catholic Diocese of Allahābād.

CASTE.

Principal castes.

61. The principal castes of the District are among those wearing the sacred thread, Brāhmans, Rājputs and Baniās; among cultivating castes of good status Ahīrs, Lodhīs, Kurmīs and Kāchhis; and among those of lower status Chadārs and Telis. The primitive tribes are represented by the Gonds, Saonrs and a few Bharia-Bhumias. They are found in smaller numbers in Damoh than in most other Districts and only form about 12 per cent of the population. Chamārs numbering 34,000 persons or 12 per cent of the population are the general drudges and menials. The principal castes among proprietors are Brāhmans, Rājputs, Baniās, Lodhīs, Kurmīs and Muhammadans and among tenants Ahīrs, Lodhīs, Kurmīs, Kāchhis, Telis, Chadārs and Gonds.

Brāhmans.

62. Brāhmans form nearly 8 per cent. of the population and own 270 villages. Most of them come from Northern India and belong to the Kanaujia subdivision divided into the Jijhotias, Kanaujias and Sarwarias. The Kanaujias are the highest of all Brāhmans, and though they usually eat flesh do not do so in this District. *The Jijhotias derive their name from Jajhotī, the classical name of Bundelkhand which included Damoh.* The Sarwarias are so named from the river Sarjū in the United Provinces about which they live. The Sarwarias have the reputation of being very poor and always on the lookout to make an honest penny. As regards every custom which involves expense to themselves, they say that it is not done in their country, but if the expense falls on others they hold out vigorously for its performance. In Damoh they are considered to be the highest Brāhmans and other subdivisions consider it an honour to give their daughters to them. They often take a high price of Rs. 200 or 300 for the bridegroom,

Orthodox Sarwarias do not take presents and do not give their daughters in marriage in villages from which they have themselves taken girls. Kanaujias take girls from Jijhotias in marriage but will not give their daughters to them. The Jijhotias plough with their own lands which the Kanaujias rarely do and the Sarwarias never. These subdivisions will not even eat *katchā* food with their own caste-fellows unless they are relatives. The Sanādhyas or Sanaurhias are another branch of north-country Brāhmans, many of whom are thieves. There is a local subdivision of Sanādhyas called Belwārs who engaged in carrying goods on bullocks and hence became a separate subcaste, and are looked down on by the other Sanādhyas. The Ahiwāsis are another subcaste who also engaged in this occupation. They now permit widow-marriage and hence are greatly looked down on. They are also believed not to be true Brāhmans by descent.

Marāthā and Khedāwāl Brāhmans.

63. The Marāthā Brāhmans came into the District in the 18th century. They are locally addressed as Pandit. They are generally Karhādas from Karhād near Sātāra. The Khedāwāl Brāhmans are immigrants from Gujarāt. Their local headquarters are at Hattā, where a considerable number of them reside, including some pensioned Government officials. Their story as to the way in which they came to settle in Saugor and Damoh is as follows. On one occasion a Khedāwāl was travelling from Gujarāt to Benāres, when he saw some diamonds lying in a field. He stopped and collected as many as he could and informed the Rājā of Pannā, who gave him an estate as a reward for the discovery, and from that time other Khedāwāls began to immigrate and settle here. The Khedāwāls were usually the accountants of Baniās and agents of mālguzārs like the Kāyasths elsewhere, and like them they have acquired a bad reputation for honesty. This description of course does not apply to many families, who are highly respectable and have done well in Government service. The Khedāwāls are very

strict in their observance of caste rules and do not smoke but only chew tobacco. If a Khedāwāl is imprisoned, it will take most of the rest of his life before he is received fully back into caste. When in mourning they hire persons to beat their breasts and weep, a practice which the educated among them severely condemn. Khedāwāls have the title of Mehtā, but use other titles also as Pandi, Thākur, Dube, Tiwāri, and Dhagat. There are about 15 or 20 families of Mārwāri or Pallīwāl Brāhmans who derive their name from the town of Pāli in Mārwār. They are now traders and moneylenders but it is said that they were formerly highwaymen and that they still worship a bridle on Dasahrā in memory of their more adventurous profession. The leading families of Hindustāni Brāhmans are those of Purā, Singhpur and the Paterias of Garia; among the Marāthā Brāhmans the Bāndakpur family is the principal one, while there are a number of Khedāwāl families of good position in Hattā.

Rājputs.

64. Rājputs number 6,000 odd persons or about 2 per cent of the population and own about 120 villages. A large number of septs are represented in Damoh, and several of them are of comparatively pure blood, and intermarry with the Rjāputs of Northern India and Rājputāna. The Rājputs of Damoh retain the regular custom by which members of a clan may not marry among themselves, but must marry with some other sept, and have not developed into castes marrying among themselves as they have in other Districts. But the caste is mixed and has a number of subdivisions who are not proper Rājputs, as well as inferior or illegitimate branches of the regular clans. The chief septs or clans found in the District are the Bais, Chauhān, Gaur, Parihār and Paik. The Parihārs were once dominant in the District and an inscription of a Parihār ruler still remains in the Singorgarh fort. They belong to the four clans who were born from the fire in which expiatory rites were performed to regenerate the Kshattriyas, after their impieties had drawn on them the

vengeance of Parasu Rāma, and the caste had been slaughtered by him on twenty-one occasions; the Parihār was the first to issue from the fire-pit. The Bais, who are the most numerous clan locally, originally came from Baiswāra, a part of Oudh in the United Provinces. The Tilokchandī Bais are the aristocracy of the clan and are supposed to be descended from Tilokchand, a famous king of Oudh. The Paik Rājputs have been in the District for seven generations or more. They now intermarry with inferior Rājputs in Damoh, but are not recognised by the higher clans. The word *paik* means foot-soldier and the clan so called are probably the descendants of the military force of some chieftain. The leading families of Rājputs are the Bais family of Hattā, the Chauhān family of Khamaria, the Paik family of Barodā, and the Dīkhat family of Tindnī.

Baniās.

65. Baniās number 10,000 persons or $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent of the population and own nearly 200 villages. The principal subdivisions are the Parwārs, Charnāgars and Golāpūrabs who are Jain by religion[1] and the Agarwāls, Asāthis, Umres and others who are Hindus. All the subdivisions of Jains mentioned above belong to the Digambarī sect, and worship Nemnāth otherwise called Nangā Deo or the naked god. The Parwārs are the most influential class and have immigrated from Tīkamgarh or Tehrī State in Bundelkhand. The Charnāgars are a dissenting sect of Jains, and the others say that they were originally Chamārs, but this is probably a libel. A Parwār will eat nothing cooked by a Charnāgar. The Golāpūrabs belong to the same stock as the Parwārs and are a minority who have introduced some reforms into the details of marriage. The Asāthis are said to be the descendants of an Ahīr who became a Baniā. The Agarwāls are so called from the village Agrohā in the United Provinces from which they have immigrated. The Umre Baniās grow *al* or Indian madder (*Morinda citrifolia*) for dyeing and are sometimes called Alias.

[1] See also the notice on Jains earlier in the chapter.

Other castes refuse to grow this plant because when the roots are steeped in cowdung little worms appear, and when they are subsequently washed in water these are killed, and this is considered a sin. The Umres are chiefly found in Hindoria and Sitānagar. Trading and money-lending are the hereditary occupations of the Baniā, but many have now acquired villages and taken to agriculture. They enjoy a great deal of influence in the north of the District, where many proprietors and tenants are indebted to them. Some of the Parwār Baniās make excellent landlords.

Lodhīs.

66. The Lodhīs (37,000) are the most numerous caste in the District constituting about 13 per cent of the population, and are also the largest landlords, holding nearly 300 villages. In social status they rank as the highest agricultural caste but below Brāhmans, Rājputs and Baniās. The caste is found in large numbers in the United Provinces and Central India where it is known as Lodhā. The name Lodhī is derived by one writer from *lod*, a clod, so that Lodhī would be the exact equivalent of clodhopper. Another derivation is from the bark of the *lodh* tree (*Symplocos racemosa*), the collection of which is one of their occupations in Northern India. There the Lodhā is little better than a forest tribe in status but one of the most industrious of agriculturists, often known as *kisān* (cultivator) *par excellence*, with views almost wholly limited to his field and emphatically a man of peace. In Damoh he aspires to be a Rājput, has developed tastes for sport and freebooting, and has become decidedly the most troublesome item in the population. This is probably because he entered Damoh as a conqueror, subduing the Gonds and Saonrs who were before him, and has consequently acquired the habits and character which accompany a position of martial authority. The Lodhīs are fine men, well set-up, with a certain amount of military swagger. They are passionate and quarrelsome, and during the Mutiny

as a class they were openly disaffected, nearly every local landholder throwing off his allegiance except the petty Rājā of Hatrī. Under native rulers the Lodhī landholders of the hilly tracts in the south of the District occupied the position of semi-independent chiefs, and kept up contingents of matchlockmen and horsemen in lieu of payment of revenue. They were probably not subdued by the Muhammadans and were in the position of tributary chiefs to Chhatar Sāl of Pannā. When the Mutiny took place they had not had time to forget their ancient traditions and position, and moreover had no cause to be well affected towards the British Government, in view of the disastrous maladministration of the revenue during the first period of our rule, which pressed with peculiar severity upon the landlords. Of late years the Lodhīs have noticeably tended to develope into peaceable and orderly citizens. According to a legend of their origin the first Lodhī was created by Mahādeo from a scarecrow in a Kurmī woman's field, and was given the vocation of a farm-servant and married to a Kurmī girl. The Lodhīs probably have some connection with the Kurmīs, with whom they will eat food cooked without water. The principal subdivisions of the caste in Damoh are the Mahdele, Kerbania, Chandpuria, Jaria, Mahālodhī and Chhaparya. The first three divisions, with some others of less importance, are exogamous clans and marry with each other, probably in imitation of the Rājputs. The Mahdele are the highest. The name of the Kerbanias is derived from Kerbanā, a village in Damoh, and the Bālākote family is head of this clan. The Mahdeles have the titles of Rājā and Dīwān and the other clans those of Rao and Kunwar. These titles emanated from the Rājās of Pannā, at the time when the District was subordinate to that State, and are sometimes still conferred by them. The higher clans seclude their women, who when they go out wear long clothes covering the head and reaching to the feet. The women are not allowed to wear ornaments of a cheaper metal than silver.

The higher clans profess not to allow widow-marriage, but instances of its having occurred are known. The Lodhīs eat flesh, but not pigs or fowls. Liquor is forbidden but some of them drink it. They are good cultivators but the bulk of them are not very p.osperous as they are inclined to extravagance especially in celebrating their marriages. They share with the Bundelā Rājputs the custom of never refusing food at a feast with the idea that it would be derogatory to their manhood. They fold their hands on their stomach and look up to heaven, while much more food than they can eat is heaped on to their plates. This results in great waste and expenditure. Many Lodhī girls are not married until they are twenty or more, owing either to the expense entailed in the marriage or the difficulty of finding a husband of suitable rank. They are then sometimes married to a boy ten years younger than themselves. The Jarias, Chhaparyās, and Mahālodhis are the lowest divisions and form separate subcastes marrying among themselves. They freely permit widow-marriage. The Mahālodhīs and Chhaparyās are very industrious and are good cultivators. The Mahālodhīs grow hemp, and will eat *katchā* food or that which is cooked with water in the fields, whereas the higher clans will only eat it in the house. If a Mahālodhī takes somebody else's wife, he only has to give a feast and both are readmitted into caste. The Lodhīs are found all over the District. The principal families are those of Salaiyā (having its headquarters just across the border in Jubbulpore) Hatrī, Bālākote and Rāmgarh. There are also a large number of small proprietors, and in the Tejgarh group 33 out of 53 villages are held by Lodhī mālguzārs of this class, formerly no doubt the clansmen and supporters of the local chiefs.

Kurmīs.

67. The Kurmīs (23,000) number about 8 per cent of the population and hold something over 100 villages. Their headquarters is in the Havelī where they lost ground largely in the distressful days of the 20 years' settlement, their leases having

frequently been cancelled for default and transferred to outsiders. A considerable proportion of the men thus dispossessed were restored to their villages in 1862, but substantial evidence of past trouble remains in the large number of villages acquired by Baniās at that period. The chief local subcastes are the Usrete and Santorā. The Usrete are also called Havelia because they are found largely in the fertile wheat-growing tracts of the Northern Districts to which the name of *havelī* is given. The Santorās grow hemp and on this account are looked down on, as most Hindus object to grow hemp. The reason for this prejudice is obscure, but it may perhaps be the dirty nature of the process of cleaning and beating out the fibre. The Kurmī is the typical cultivator, his name according to one derivation being from the Sanskrit *krishi* and having this meaning. He is thrifty and hardworking, peaceably disposed and averse to litigation. Kurmīs rank below Dāngis and Lodhīs who were formerly dominant castes, but somewhat above Kāchhis, and are on the same level as Ahīrs. Their women work in the fields and are very strong and of great assistance in cultivation. "Good is the caste of the Kurmin; with a hoe in her hand she goes to the fields, and works with her husband." It is advantageous to the Kurmī to have two or three wives and polygamy is comparatively common among them. Girls are married very young, frequently when they are only five or six, and occasionally even at one or two years old. It is said that when a Kurmī gets rich he will do three things; first marry his daughter very young and with great expense and display, next build himself the largest house he can afford, and lastly buy himself the best cattle. It is said that they view adultery very leniently, a husband often taking his wife back after she has gone wrong with another man of the caste, while he and the seducer are readmitted to social intercourse after feasting the caste-fellows. A Kurmī will sometimes take his wife back even after a *liaison* with a Brāhman, though not with a man of any other caste.

68. The Kāchhis (14,000) constitute nearly 5 per cent of the population. They are probably an occupational offshoot of Kurmīs, and their profession is to grow vegetables and garden crops on small patches of irrigated or kachhār land at which they are very skilful. "Give a Kāchhi water and he will grow a crop on a rock." They very seldom acquire much property and the District has only one Kāchhi proprietor. The Kāchhis rank somewhat below the Kurmīs, and will eat *katchā* food from both a Kurmī and Lodhi though their women will not do so. They live all over the District and are quiet and well-disposed.

Kāchhis.

69. Ahīrs number 4½ per cent of the population and own 16 villages. The chief subcastes found locally are the Bharotias, Jijhotias and Kaonrās or Kamarias. The Jijhotias, who like the Jijhotia Brāhmans derive their name from Jajhotī the classical name for Bundelkhand, are the most numerous and are found in every village. They do not drink liquor and on that account consider themselves superior to the two other subcastes. The Dauwās are another subdivision who are really illegitimate as they are the offspring of Bundelā fathers by Ahīr women, who were employed as *dais* or wet-nurses in Bundelā families. But this is not considered a disgrace, and an Ahīr is very pleased to be considered a Dauwā, just as Bābu, which originally meant the illegitimate son of a king, has come to be an honourable title. The Ghosīs are an inferior branch of the caste, who keep buffaloes and probably became differentiated by taking to this special avocation. All castes will take water from an Ahīr, and in fact cannot help doing so, because he always mixes water with the milk which he sells. The great festival of the Ahīrs is the Diwāli, when they go to the *khirkā* or standing-place for the village cattle, and after worshipping Guraiyā and Nat, their special gods, frighten the cattle by waving fans made of leaves of the basil-plant at them, and then put on

Ahīrs.

fantastic dresses, decorating themselves with cowries, and go round the village singing and dancing. They also worship the cattle, and then have races with them. When a calf is born the Ahīr first milks the teats several times on to the ground as an offering of first fruits, calling on Guraiyā and Nat. Nat is any acrobat belonging to the caste of that name, who has fallen and been killed while rope-dancing. He is deified and worshipped. The Ahīrs do not as a rule get rich. Their wealth consists in their cattle, and when an epidemic occurs they are liable to lose them all and be reduced to poverty.

Chādārs, Khangārs and Dahaits.

70. Chadārs, Khangārs and Dahaits are three kindred castes who are employed as village watchmen. The Chadārs are the most numerous. They are also engaged in weaving coarse country cloth and are sometimes called Chirār, an abbreviation of the Sanskrit *Chīrkār* or weaver. The names of their *gotras* or septs are totemistic as *Khatkīra* (bug), *Sungaria* (pig) and others. They do not injure the animals to whose sept they belong, and at the time of marriages make pictures of them on the wall with *ghī* and worship the representations. The Khangārs and Dahaits are above the Chadārs and call themselves Kotwāl, whereas the Chadārs are called Kotwārs. It is said that the Kotwāl was formerly the official responsible for the watch and ward of the village or town, while the Kotwār performed the menial police duties. The distinction is of course no longer recognised. The Dahaits were the people who formerly stood behind Rājās and fanned them, and also went in front to clear the way, and announce their coming. They used to carry the silver mace in front of the Rājā and hence were called Chobdār. Both Khangārs and Dahaits are strong, well-built men and have thieving propensities. It was said of the Khangār "The Khangār is not a man until he has a *khūnta* in his hand." *Khūnta* is an iron spike used for breaking through the walls of houses. But many of them have settled down to more honest avocations.

The Parkās are also village watchmen, and rank with the Chadārs. They do not weave clothes but make them up from cloth.

71. Gonds (28,000) number nearly 10 per cent of the population and own some 50 villages. They have lost even within recent times a large number of the villages which they formerly held and only a few important estates survive as those of Khāri-Deorī, Sonbarrā, Singrāmpur and Kondā. Gond proprietors are as a class grossly improvident, and only the interference of Government has saved the larger estates, while the small proprietors, with whose affairs Government could not concern itself, have given place to the moneylender in large numbers. The Gonds are chiefly found in the forest tracts south of Damoh and north of Hattā. The subtribes found in Damoh are the Rāj-Gonds, Khatulhās and Bhoīs. The Rāj-Gonds were the ruling subdivision but are now found in large numbers, and it is clear that anyone who managed to acquire property has been allowed to become a Rāj-Gond. They have adopted Hinduism, employ Kanaujia and Sarwaria Brāhmans for their ceremonies, wear the sacred thread and forbid widow-marriage. In Damoh they claim to have come from Gujarāt before Akbar's times. The Khatulhā Gonds belonged to the old Gond principality of Khatolā in Bijāwar. They occasionally intermarry with Rāj-Gonds though the latter consider them as somewhat lower than themselves. The Bhoī or Pārsi Gonds are the most primitive members of the tribe. They keep fowls and the higher castes sometimes consider their touch to be defiling. Gonds, however, have a pride of their own and no outsider, not even a Brāhman or Rājput, can become a Gond. All the Gonds worship the sāj, mahuā, mango and achār trees, and will not cut or burn them. Their principal god is Burā Deo, who is supposed to live in a *kohā* tree (*Terminalia Arjuna*) in the forest. Most of the tribe have abandoned their own language and speak a broken Hindī, but a few of the Bhoī Gonds in the wilder tracts still speak it.

Gonds.

Saonrs.

72. Another tribe are the Saonrs, of whom there are about 4,000. These rank below the Gonds and are more primitive, though they do not eat fowls, pig or dead cattle. The term Rāwat, which is sometimes returned as a caste name, appears to be merely a title adopted by the better class of Saonrs. The Saonrs formerly practised shifting cultivation, but this is now prohibited. They are wretched cultivators and still sow juār by jabbing the seeds in with a pointed stick, which they say was the implement given to them for this purpose by Mahādeo. Most of them collect and sell forest produce, as they are very clever at climbing the trees and rocks to get honey. They also make charcoal and dig up a root called Baichāndi, which they sell to the confectioners for the preparation of sweetmeats. Formerly when a Saonr girl was married her father used to allot to her a tract of forest with the exclusive right of cutting its produce. The Saonrs erect earthen mounds under teak or sāj trees to the spirits of members of the tribe who have died a violent death or were distinguished sorcerers. Such trees must not be cut down. Like the Baigā, the Saonr is a great sorcerer. They generally burn their dead. It is also said that when his wife or child was ill a Saonr or Gond would burn down a certain tract of forest with the object of destroying the small animals and insects contained in it, hoping by this sacrifice of life to propitiate the angry gods and induce them to spare his wife or child.

Bharia-Bhumias.

73. A few Bharia-Bhumias are found in the Hattā tahsīl. Bhumia is an honorific term meaning "Lord of the soil" and is sometimes also applied to Gonds and Saonrs. The tribe call themselves Kondar-Bandar, which means that they are like monkeys. They are always labourers and farm-servants and usually the bond-slaves of their masters, as a Bharia has no idea of saving or keeping money. In Jubbulpore they are considered to be thieves, but are too primitive to have such a propensity in Damoh. Their favourite weapons are the axe and the

bānka or curved knife. Poor Bharias do not perform a marriage ceremony at all, but the couple simply go and live with each other. The ceremony will be performed subsequently when the means are forthcoming. The Bharias are the lowest of the tribes, and yet they will not take water from a barber or take leaf-plates made by him. But they consent to be shaved by a barber when they can afford it. They have a special dislike for horses and usually will not touch one. They regard the Gonds as a superior caste and will take *katchā* food from their hands. The Bharias are very dirty and do not bathe for days together. A strip of rag round the waist, another on the head, and a blanket form the sum of their clothing. The blanket serves for warmth in the cold weather, as a mattress in the summer and in lieu of a waterproof in the rains.

Chamārs.

74. Chamārs number 34,000 persons or 12 per cent of the population. Though the largest class numerically next to Lodhīs, they have not got a single village, and only a small number of them are tenants. They form a menial and labouring class and as a rule are miserably poor. The Chamār of the Northern Districts is in fact a regular helot. He is the village drudge and has to do all the forced labour. The Chamār castrates cattle and cures hides. Sometimes he fences the threshing floor and as a reward is given the droppings of cattle, from which he picks out the undigested grain. The Chamārs are the only class who will remove the carcases of dead cattle, which they eat without regard to the disease from which the animal may have died. But they will not touch the corpse of a horse, dog or uncloven footed animal, nor will they kill a cow or an ox though they eat cow's flesh. A Chamār who once killed a calf accidentally had to go to the Ganges to purify himself. The crime of cattle-poisoning is consequently very rare in Damoh. The Chamār is not considered so impure here as in the south and east of the Province, and he is allowed to go into all rooms of the house except the cooking and eating-rooms. The men make shoes and the leather ropes and thongs required for

agriculture and the women sometimes work as midwives, and have most of the forced labour to do. The men are very dark in colour, more so than the women. The Chamār is very strong and makes the best farm-servant and coolie for earthwork. It is a proverb that 'A Chamār has half a rib more than other men.' Notwithstanding his strength, however, he is a great coward, this characteristic having probably been acquired through centuries of oppression.

Criminal classes.

75. There are no very definite criminal classes. The Khangārs, Dahaits and Sanaurhia Brāhmans were formerly professional thieves, but such a statement would probably not now be true as regards the majority of them. The Bernīs or village dancing-girls have a bad reputation as being inclined to crime and also much addicted to drink. There are a few Gorandās in the District who are the descendants of Thags, but they are now quite respectable. The Saonrs are said to be inclined to petty theft. Muhammadan fakīrs become thieves if they take to opium-smoking. Like other Districts, Damoh is visited by wandering gangs of Baluchis and Afghāns. The Baluchis are regular thieves, while the Afghāns act as swindling commission agents, taking round common articles and selling them to servants and ignorant people for more than their real value. They charge exorbitant interest on debts and extort payment by threats of personal violence. But they do not commit ordinary thefts.

Impure castes. Sweepers.

76. The impure castes are the Bhangīs or Mehtars, Basors, and Chamārs. If a Brāhman touches one of these he must wash, and if he touches a sweeper he must change his sacred thread. Chadārs and Korīs are not impure, nor usually are Kumhārs. The Dhobī is also not touched. When he brings the clothes he stands in the verandah, and the women take them from him, but do not touch them so long as he touches them. He is however above the Chamār and Basor because the clothes which he washes are worn. The Gadherā and Sungaria

Kumhārs who keep donkeys and pigs are sometimes considered as impure and the higher castes will not use their vessels. They usually make bricks and tiles. The Bardia Kumhārs who keep buffaloes are not impure. The sweeper will eat other people's leavings, but he will not eat them in their house. He will take them away to his own house. It is related that on one occasion a sweeper accompanied a marriage party of Lodhīs. The Lodhī who was the host asked him to eat in his house, so that his hospitality might not be refused by anyone, but he would not, so the Lodhī gave him a she-buffalo to induce him to eat. Nobody touches a sweeper, and he himself acquiesces in this and walks apart. In large towns he carries a kite's wing in his *pagrī* to show that he is a sweeper, or walks apart saying "pöis," which is equivalent to a warning. Women of other castes sometimes become sweepers, and even men if they are very poor. In Bundelkhand sweepers are employed as grooms by Lodhīs, but not in Damoh. They may then put everything on to the horse except the saddle-cloth. The Lālbegīs are a special sect of sweepers who follow the precepts of a *gurū* or master residing in the Punjab. They have a small platform in their house with steps leading up to it and a little red flag on the top, which represents Lālbeg, the founder of the sect. It is said that his teaching was to the effect that nobody except a sweeper could go to heaven, but those persons on whom the dust settled while he was sweeping acquired thereby a certain modicum of virtue. The *gurū* or preceptor wears good clothes and is followed by a sweeper carrying an umbrella over him. His precepts are to live a good life and harm nobody. Other castes of sweepers are Helās and Dumārs, and these are looked down on by the Lālbegīs. The Dumār will eat food in other people's houses.

SOCIAL LIFE AND CUSTOMS.

Marriage.

77. The usual age of marriage is 15 for boys and 9 for girls, but there is a tendency to raise the age of marriage of boys, and

sometimes they are not married until they are twenty or more. A Kurmī who is well off will marry his daughter at four or five years old, this being a means of acquiring social prestige. Among Brāhmans, Rājputs and Kāyasths a price is usually paid to the father of the bridegroom, which may amount to Rs. 200 or Rs. 300, or a larger sum for a well-educated Kāyasth boy. Occasionally if the bride's father will not pay the bridegroom-price or tries to cheat, the bridegroom does not carry out the custom of untying a knot in the cords or breaking off a mango-leaf from the marriage shed, which is considered to show the conclusion of the marriage. In this case the bride's father incurs a great social stigma. A case is quoted of a man who had agreed to pay Rs. 300 in clothes and other things for a Brāhman boy in Government service, but at the marriage he over-valued the presents by fifty rupees, in reality only giving things of the value of Rs. 250. Then the boy's father would not let him untie the marriage-shed and they went away. Ten days afterwards the bride's father had to pay Rs. 50 and bring the whole wedding procession back and give them a feast in order to get the marriage-shed undone. Before a marriage is arranged the barber is sent to inspect the prospective bridegroom, and if his report is satisfactory, proposals are made for the marriage. This is called *bar dikhāi*. The betrothal ceremony consists in the presentation of a rupee and a cocoanut to the boy's father, while *batāshas* or sugar-cakes are distributed to those who are present. Among the well-to-do classes the marriage takes place very soon after the betrothal, but if the parents cannot afford the expenses of the ceremony it may be postponed for a year or two. As a rule women do not accompany the wedding procession, but among Parwār Baniās they do. One of the ceremonies at the marriage is that called *maihar*. The eldest woman in the bride's family prepares cakes of wheat-flour and water

bride and bridegroom then take up a cake each, and the others are distributed to all the relations of the bride's family who are present. It is a sort of family sacrament in which only relations can participate. The women of all castes sing obscene songs on the occasion of a marriage. At a wedding among Dhobīs, Dhīmars and Telīs, one of the men puts on a long coat tight down to the waist and loose like a skirt round the hips, to imitate a dancing-girl. He puts on anklets and dances and sings before the party, while two or three other men beat drums and a brass dish. He also visits the houses of well-to-do persons and dances before them and receives a present. After the marriage the bride goes back with the bridegroom's party to his house, but only stays there a day or two and then returns to her own house. The *gaunā* or going-away ceremony is performed in the first, third or fifth year after the marriage, when the husband accompanied by a few relations goes and fetches his wife on a day fixed by a Brāhman. Among the lower castes, if the girl has attained adolescence she goes at once to her husband's house and no *gaunā* ceremony is performed. When a Rājput girl is married it is sometimes customary in families of high rank to give her a number of maid-servants to go with her to her husband's house. These are taken from the serving castes of Nai and Dhīmar and Rs. 100 to Rs. 200 are paid to the family from whom a girl is taken. They are either married to servants or kept as concubines by the husband. This custom is a method of social display.

Widow-marriage.

78. Brāhmans, Rājputs, Kāyasths, Sonārs, Baniās and Lodhis prohibit widow-marriage in Damoh, while all other castes allow it. The Ahiwāsi Brāhmans allow widow-marriage and are looked down on for this. Only widows participate in the marriage of a widow and married women are not allowed to see it. The bride is brought to her husband's house after sunset on a day in the dark fortnight of the

widow puts glass bangles on her wrist, and the ceremony is concluded.

Birth ceremonies.

79. Before the birth of the first child of a married woman a ceremony called *Aganno* is performed. When the ninth month of pregancy has come, the girl's parents send to her father-in-law's house by the barber some steeped gram, lac bangles, some cakes, clothes and a silver flute. The girl is seated in the inner courtyard on the *chauk* or a square or angular figure made of lines of flour, wearing the new clothes and bangles. The barber's wife then pours the grain over her head through a sieve, that which falls in front being taken by the husband's sister, and that falling behind her by the barber's wife. The husband's younger brother takes the flute, puts it to the married woman's ear and blows through it. Sugar-cakes are then distributed to the guests. After a birth the placenta and naval cord are buried in a corner of the lying-in room in a shallow hole, over which a fire is kept burning till they are consumed. It is said that if they are not properly burnt the child will vomit. Neither these nor the knife with which the umbilical cord is severed must be allowed to fall into the possession of a barren woman, or she will be able by means of them to transfer to herself the wife's fertility. The mother herself washes the knife on the 10th day, so that it is deprived of this virtue, and then returns it to the barber's wife to whom it belongs. For the first ten days after the birth the Basorin stays with the mother and child as the impurity lasts during this time. Among Brāhmans the Basorin should not be employed as midwife if a woman of any other caste can be obtained. Muhammadans or Christians will be employed in preference to the Basorin. Subsequently the barber's wife comes and remains as long as she is required, rubbing the woman and child with oil. While the mother stays in the lying-in room, she is only given hot water to drink, boiled with ginger and *ajwain* (*Carum copticum*) and her food consists of

pieces of cocoanut, *chironjī* the fruit of the achār-tree, sugar, ghī, ginger and *pīpar* (*Scindapsus officinalis*). These delicacies are apparently intended to give strength to the child, and the hot water to prevent both mother and child from catching cold. A fire is also kept burning in the lying-in room. Under the circumstances it is not a matter for astonishment that the death-rate among women in child-birth is high. Rejoicings for the birth are held on the 10th day for a male and the 9th for a female child. The mother and child are seated on the *chauk* in the courtyard, the child's head being covered in the mother's cloth so that it may not see the lamp, as otherwise it is believed that it will become blind. The women of the village come and sing songs and are given sugar-cakes, and the relatives make presents of silver bangles, caps, toys and cloth to the child, and are given some money in return. When a woman is in the period of menstruation she keeps aloof for four days, and at the end of that time washes herself and rubs oil over her whole body. During menstruation a Brāhman woman must not go to the fire, so she cannot cook food.

Death ceremonies.

80. When a man is about to die, gifts of cows, cash or grain are made to Brāhmans by him or his relatives. These will procure absolution for sins. When he is at his last gasp, he is laid on the ground on a blanket, and a piece of gold, some leaves of the *tulsī* or basil plant, and some Ganges water are placed in his mouth. If he dies while saying *Rām Rām*, he is considered very fortunate. A man dying on the Ekādashī or 11th day of any month or on the festival of Janamashtamī is believed to obtain a specially good place in the other world. Before the corpse is taken to the burning-ghāt it is bathed, and covered with a mixture of powdered sandalwood and camphor. It is then placed on a bamboo bier covered with straw, with a new cloth over it, and carried out feet first, preceded by the son or some other relative

as chief mourner. He holds in his hand a small new earthen pot with fire in it, and on the way this is placed under a pīpal tree and then carried on again, a pice or two being left under the tree. On the way those who are well-to-do throw pice or silver coins over the corpse, which are picked up by Basors or Mehtars. The corpse is placed on the pyre, and a mixture of ghī, sandal-wood powder and sesamum seeds are applied to its mouth, eyes, ears and nostrils. When the body is half consumed the son strikes the skull seven times with a piece of wood, and thus gives exit to the soul. All the mourners then throw small pieces of wood on to the pyre, in the same manner apparently as Christians throw dust into a grave. When the party return home the dead man's widow is taken to a tank, where her bangles are broken, and the *tiklī* or little disc of glass on the forehead and *bichhias* or toe-rings are removed.

Mourning.

81. On the third day after the cremation or, if the third day is a Sunday or Wednesday, then on the fourth day, the son or some other relative goes to the burning-ground, sprinkles the ashes with milk or water, and then collects them and the bones to be subsequently taken to a sacred river. Those who cannot afford this throw the ashes into an adjoining tank or stream. *Pindās* or sacrificial cakes are then offered with the assistance of a Brāhman, and in the evening the son goes to a pīpal tree with a barber and a Brāhman, and hangs on its branches two earthen pots, one containing water and the other a lamp. These are renewed from day to day, and are supposed to refresh the spirit of the deceased. On the 10th day the house is cleaned, all clothes are washed, and the males of the family shave their heads, if the dead person is one of their parents, their elder brother or their uncle or aunt. Gifts of vessels, clothes, shoes and other articles like those used by the deceased are made to Katyā or Mahā-Brāhmans. These are a special class looked down on by other Brāhmans

on account of their accepting such gifts. Formerly a large sum of money had frequently to be given to a Brāhman to induce him to accept these gifts, as he was excommunicated for doing so. But the professional class of Mahā-Brāhmans has now come into existence. Among Brāhmans all the clothes and bedding of all persons in the family had formerly to be given away on a death. This rule was probably devised with the idea of removing infection. Another rule was that the members of the family in which the death occurred were not allowed to go to the well or market or to cook their own food, but had to employ persons to do this for them. They did not sleep on a cot but on the ground. On the 13th day a feast is given to the caste-fellows. and a portion of food is placed on the spot where the deceased died and is then given to a cow. Among the lower castes mourning ends on the third day and the feast takes place then. During mourning the members of the family, especially the chief mourner, do not wear shoes, sleep on cots, eat betel-leaf, worship idols, or visit their friends.

Houses.

82. The mālguzār's house is usually two-storeyed, and stands in a compound or *angan* about 60 feet long and 30 broad, with the house against the back wall and open sheds or *bārās* on each side. The house itself is 9 or 10 feet wide and extends along the length of the back wall of the compound. Both mālguzārs and tenants usually have tiled houses. The lower storey has three or four rooms and the upper, one or two. The walls are of brick, stone or mud. In two lower rooms are built large earthen receptacles called *kuthias* for storing grain, each of which can hold 5 or 10 *mānis* (of 480 lbs). A hole is made in the bottom of the vessel to draw out the grain. The cattle are sometimes kept in the sheds in the compound, or if the owner can afford it in a separate house. A roofed gateway is called *paur.* Tenants have similar houses but smaller and with no gateways, and farm-servants have a single room with a veranda in front. Such a house is worth Rs. 10, while a

tenant's house may cost Rs. 100 to Rs. 200, and a mālguzār's Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 2,000. Mālguzārs have little wooden stools for sitting on, 6 inches or a foot high. Others sit on the ground. Everyone has a cot to sleep on except the Gonds, who sleep on the ground, and in the cold weather make a fire in a shallow hole and sleep round it, turning each side alternately to the fire for warmth. Others who cannot afford a cot spread kodon-straw on the ground, and sleep on a mattress or *godrī* made of old clothes and rags sewn together. The cooking and eating vessels of a well-to-do person are of copper or brass and cost about Rs. 50. A tenant uses earthen vessels principally for cooking, and his metal ones will cost about Rs. 15. Even a farm-servant always has one brass *lotā* and dish which cost about Rs. 1-8, and last for 8 or 10 years. All his other vessels are of earthenware and can be replaced for about a rupee annually. Every house has a *sil* or slab of stone and a *lodhā* or stone roller for pounding spices and turmeric, and a *chakkī* or grinding-mill. Gonds and Saonrs have no metal vessels, and use earthen pots or gourds.

Food.

83. Most people eat only twice a day, at midday and in the evening. Those who go to work in the fields have a *kalewā* or early breakfast which consists of cold food left over from the night before or roasted mahuā and gram. Only the well-to-do now eat wheat, while ordinary agriculturists eat juār and gram and wheat for a few months after the harvest. The midday and evening meals are of the same nature and consist of boiled rice or kodon with pulse, or *chapātis* of wheat, gram or juār with vegetables. The midday meal is called *jewan* and is the largest, and the evening meal is called *byāri*. Sometimes rice and kodon are boiled in butter-milk as a delicacy. In the hot weather ground gram is boiled in butter-milk and chillies and salt are added. This is called *karhī* and is a very favourite food. In the rains the leaves of the little *ponwār* seed (*Cassia Tora*) are fried in ghī or oil and eaten as a vegetable. Juār *chapātis* and gram leaves are the

commonest food. These *chapātis* are small and thick. The mixture of boiled rice or kodon and water called *pej*, which is so common in other Districts, is not known in Damoh. Farm-servants and labourers sometimes only eat once a day, and will then consume two or three pounds at a time, getting up and rubbing themselves well at intervals, and then sitting down and going on again. They can last out on this for the whole twenty-four hours. Brāhmans only eat twice a day because they cannot take the trouble to have the food cooked oftener. Every time cooking is done the cooking-place must be spread afresh with cowdung.

Clothes.

84. Men keep two *dhotīs* or loin cloths which they change daily when they bathe. Nearly everyone bathes every day, usually at a well, tank or stream. Only the better class of people in towns bathe in their houses. Townspeople have *dhotīs* of English and agriculturists of country cloth. These last for a year. They are either white or red. They wear a *kurtā* or shirt buttoning at the neck and over this a *mirzai* or short coat folding across in front and tied by strings. In winter a *mirzai* stuffed with cotton, and dyed black or dark green so as not to show the dirt is worn. Some people have an *angarkhā* or long coat coming to the knees for occasions of ceremony. The *pagrī* or regular head-dress made of a long narrow strip of cloth twisted into innumerable folds is scarcely ever worn now, most people having an *angochhā* or *dupattā*, that is, a short piece of cloth which they can fold themselves. Under this is a little cotton cap, which is worn alone in the house. Townspeople wear a round cap of felt or velvet. In the winter agriculturists wear a cap stuffed with cotton and dyed to a dark colour with flaps coming down over the ears. Women wear a piece of cloth 7 or 8 yards long and 36 to 40 inches wide. This is called *dhoti* if it is plain and *sāri* if it has ornamental borders. These cloths are usually coloured red. They are secured round the waist and folded over the shoulder in the ordinary manner, and are woven or dyed

locally. *Lahengās* or skirts are now worn only on holidays as a rule. They are usually of English checked print with a red ground, and different patterns in ugly colours. When a woman wears a *lahengā* she must also have an *orhnī* which is made of English cotton print or red cloth. This covers the head and shoulders and one end is secured in the skirt in front. Women also have an *angia* or breast-cloth which differs from a *cholī* because it is tied behind. Unmarried girls may not wear an *angia* but have a little loose coat called *phatoī*. The clothes both of a man and a woman cost roughly Rs. 7 or Rs. 8 a year without shoes. Most people wear their hair as long as the edge of their *pagrīs*. Sanyāsis and some Muhammadans shave their heads. Brāhmans should let the hair grow on a patch of the head equal in size to the hoof of a cow. Rājputs, Lodhis and Kāyasths frequently wear beards in Damoh, but not other castes. Rājputs have very long beards. Every man has a *chotī* or scalp-lock and usually shaves the front of his head and cuts his hair at the back.

Shoes.

85. All the men wear shoes called *jhabbādār*, from their having long flaps in front and behind to protect the feet from thorns. Bundelā Rājputs have very long flaps coming half-way up the legs and ornamented with lace and red woollen cloth. The shoes are oiled to make them soft before use. The country people will not wear nails in their shoes, because they think that if a man does this he will be born in the next life as a horse. Women who work in the fields wear sandals open at the heels. When they meet elderly men of their own family or of the village they take off their shoes to show their respect.

Ornaments.

86. Silver ornaments for the wife of a well-to-do mālguzār cost about Rs. 200 including a gold nose-ring and earrings. Cheaper silver ornaments would come to about Rs. 60. Those who cannot afford silver wear bell-metal. Among the characteristic ornaments are *paijnās* or hollow anklets with balls inside

to make them clink; *ghungharias* or hollow sockets with balls inside; *bānkas* or bracelets of twisted wire with knobs; *gajurias* or bangles covered with rows of little spikes; *dohrīs* or bracelets with rows of balls; *kaknās* or bangles with one row of balls on a stiff wire; *anothās* or rings for the big toe, and *bichhias* or rings for the other toes. The nose-rings worn are larger than in Nāgpur but not so large as in the Eastern Districts. Pearls are not so much worn as in the south. Khedāwāl and Marāthā Brāhmans will not wear silver above the waist, and it is said that the leading families of Lodhīs have also adopted this fashion. Mārwāri women wear ivory bangles which are carved from the tusks of elephants in Ratlām.

LEADING FAMILIES.

Landholding castes.

87. As in other Districts large numbers of villages are held by Brāhmans and Baniās, the former possessing 270 and the latter 181 out of 1,374 settlement villages. The Brāhmans include a number of old Marāthā Brāhman families who obtained their estates at the time of the Poona ascendancy, and also of the Jijhotia and other north-country Brāhmans whose residence in the District dates from a more remote period. Among the Baniās, the Parwārs who are Jains by religion are prominent as in Saugor. The principal castes of cultivators are Lodhīs and Kurmis, and of these the Lodhīs possess 289 and the Kurmis 115 villages. The Lodhīs were formerly a ruling caste and included a number of influential families who had for a long time previous to the British annexation been holding their estates by prescription, or by a grant from the ruling power, equivalent in some cases to quasi-sovereignty. These families resembled the zamīndārs of the Southern and Eastern Districts, but at the time when the zamīndāri status was conferred, their estates had already been 50 years under British administration and had lost the distinctive features which they formerly possessed. They were, therefore, simply settled village by village and no special status was granted to them.

The Kurmīs are the best agricultural caste in the District. Their headquarters is in the *havelī* tract, where however they lost ground largely during the distressful days of the 20 years' settlement, their leases having frequently been cancelled for default and transferred to outsiders. A considerable proportion of the men thus dispossessed were restored to their villages in 1862, but substantial evidence of past trouble remains in the number of villages held by Baniās. The Gonds have lost even within recent times a very large number of the villages they once held, but some important estates survive. The most prominent land-holder in the District is the Muhammadan proprietor of the large Māla estate.

Marāthā Brāhman families.

88. Among Marāthā Brāhman families, the most important is that of Pandit Lakshman Rao, and his nephew Vishwanāth Rao. They are the descendants of Nārāyan Rao or Bālāji Dīwān who administered Damoh under the Marāthās and was given an annuity of Rs. 1,200 by the British. This was however stopped when his wife, in spite of an express prohibition, committed *satī* after his death on the bank of the tank which he had built in Damoh and which is still called the Dīwānji's tank. Lakshman Rao's father did good service in the Mutiny, and was an Honorary Magistrate. The family are managers of the Bāndakpur temple. They own some 12 villages, but are heavily indebted.

Other Brāhmans.

89. The Pateria family of Garia who are Jijhotia Brāhmans are the largest landholders in the Hattā tahsīl, owning nearly 30 villages between them. The head of the family Rāmprasād Pateria was distinguished by his liberality in the conciliation proceedings, but is heavily indebted to the Bhārgava Bank at Jubbulpore. Another Jijhotia family is that of Purā. They bear the title of Gurū, having been the priests of some Bundelā king. They own some 16 villages. In Hattā are a number of old Khedāwāl Brāhman families, some members of whom have entered Government service and held fairly high posts.

90. Rājputs own a number of villages and include some families of fairly high standing who arrange their marriages in Northern India, and do not intermarry with the local Rājputs. The most important family are the proprietors of Hattā, who have the title of Hazāri, a military term meaning 'Commander of a thousand horse.' They are Bais Rājputs and belonged to the tract of Baiswāra in Oudh, where they still marry their daughters. Thākur Pratāp Singh Hazāri is the present representative of the family. He owns some eight or ten villages. Other families are those of Khamaria, Tindnī and Barodā. The only important Dāngi family is that of Dharampurā, which obtained a grant of some villages confiscated from the Gond Rājā of Garhā-Mandlā for the good service which they did in the Mutiny. They hold some 35 villages The present representative does not bear a very good character.

Rājputs and Dāngis.

91. Among the Lodhī families the most prominent are those of Hindoria, Bālākote and Hatrī, and there are also a number of small Lodhī landholders. The Hindoria and Hatrī families are descended from Thākur Budha Singh, who founded Hindoria and acquired a large estate in the time of Chhatar Sāl of Pannā. His descendants lost much of this during the Marāthā rule and now hold some 16 villages Thākur Raghurāj Singh is the present representative of the family. During the Mutiny Kishore Singh, his great-uncle, rebelled and seized the Damoh treasury and burnt the Government offices. On the suppression of the Mutiny the estate was at first confiscated, but was afterwards restored to Kishore Singh's nephew, Umrao Singh a minor. The estate is held on a quit-rent of Rs. 1,000. The Hatrī family owns the estate of that name comprising 32 villages. They bear the title of Rājā and are considered the head of the Lodhī caste in Damoh. Rājā Harbans Rai confers the title of Dīwān on members of the caste, for which he receives a substantial gratification. The ancestor of the family was

Lodhī families.

Rājā Tej Singh who founded Tejgarh some 200 years ago, where his tomb is still to be seen. The estate was held revenue-free under the Marāthās and on the annexation was assessed to an annual quit-rent of Rs. 1,000, which was reduced to Rs. 500 for the services rendered by the family in the Mutiny. At the death of the present representative it will be assessed to a fourth of the revenue demand (*kāmil jamā*). The estate is heavily involved and is under the management of the Court of Wards. The Bīlākote family are the head of the Kerbania Lodhīs. The present representative is Rao Takhat Singh who has five or six villages. The estate was formerly held on a quit-rent from the Marāthās, and under the British Government until the Mutiny of 1857, when the quit-rent tenure was forfeited as the family were suspected of disloyalty. The estate is now held in ordinary proprietary right. Another old family is that of Kerbanā and Ghugrā, but their property is confined to two or three villages.

Saonr and Gond families.

92. Among the Saonrs the only important family is that of Gobrā, which is an old one and dates from the time of the Mandlā Gond kings. The estate was granted by them for military service and was formerly much larger than it now is. The family call themselves Rāwats which is an honorific name for Saonrs. The present representative Rājā Khet Singh of Gobrā holds 18 villages. He is an old man, and the estate is somewhat involved and is under the management of the Court of Wards. The title of Rājā is recognised by Government, and Rājā Khet Singh holds the second seat in the District Darbār and is entitled to a private interview with the Chief Commissioner. The family are simple and uneducated, and it is related that Gumān Singh, the father of Khet Singh, never took his food until he had ascertained that all the people in the village had had their's. A drum used to be beaten in his house and anyone who was hungry could come and eat. Another prominent family is that of Kharī-Deorī which is Rāj-Gond. The present proprietor Lakhan

Singh is commonly known as Rājā, though the title is not recognised by Government. The estate consists of 12 villages and is under the management of the Court of Wards.

Muhammadan families.

93. The principal Muhammadan proprietors are the Maulvi family of Māla. The founder of their fortunes was an Extra-Assistant Commissioner Mazhar Jamīl, who belonged to Morādābād and was stationed at Hardā in the Mutiny. He did good service and arrested a rebel Gond landholder of Damoh, one Rājā Gangādhar. As a reward for this, the Māla estate comprising 65 villages was conferred on his son, Fazl-ul-Kādir he himself having died. The late proprietor Maulvi Zahur-ul-Islam has recently died, and the estate is held by his widow, who is at present involved in litigation with the representatives of another branch of the family. The last proprietor took little interest in the management of his estate and devoted himself principally to sport. The Muhammadan family of Tendūkhedā also received their estate as a grant for services in the Mutiny when the recipients of the grant Alı Muhammad and Nūr Muhammad were Sūbahdārs in a Native regiment and did good service.

Other families.

94. Among prominent Baniā families may be mentioned Seth Brindāwan Parwār Baniā, the manager of the Jain temple at Kundalpur, and Seth Sukhdeo Munīm, agent of the firm of Raghunāth Dās Hamīr Mal of Ajmer, who is a prominent citizen of Damoh. The Marāthā family of Bānsa hold that village on a revenue-free grant from the time of the Bundelās, their ancestor Pīlāji having commanded an army which the Peshwā sent to the assistance of Chhatar Sāl of Pannā. Only one of the family lives in Bānsa, the others having taken up their residence in Poona to the neglect of their estate. They owned three villages in Damoh and two in Saugor, but have become heavily involved through an unscrupulous agent and have lost half of their estate, while the other half is mortgaged. Among other gentlemen who, though not possessing especially

large estates, deserve mention on account of their standing or services are Khān Bahādur Imdād Alī Pleader, another prominent citizen of Damoh, who has written a short history of the District, and was distinguished by his liberality to his tenants in the proceedings for the remission of debt; Pandit Dāmodar Rao, for many years Secretary of the Damoh Municipal Committee; and several Khedāwāl Brāhmans of Hattā who have held positions in the subordinate or ministerial service.

CHAPTER IV.

AGRICULTURE.

SOILS.

The Havelī.

95. In soils and character of cultivation, the open valley of the Sonār known as the *havelī* differs considerably from the rest of the District. The lands are here almost uniformly composed of black soil of the light and friable kind known locally as *mund*. The depth is generally considerable and differences in productiveness are mainly due to differences in lie of surface. Low-lying land is valuable because it stores moisture from the surface drainage which collects on it. Flat land, however high-lying, is not much less valuable, as it retains the rain which falls on it and loses little by surface flow. But the slopes which lie between these two classes are of very inferior value. Not only do they dry up more quickly and are less able to stand long periods of drought, but the scour of their surface by drainage constantly denudes them of the finer particles of soil, and in particular deprives them of the soluble nitrate salts which are concentrated in the upper layers of the soil during the hot weather months. These distinctions in lie of surface are well recognised by the people, and nothing gave more confidence in the recent settlement than their recognition in the land-classing system adopted. The fields are not usually embanked in the *havelī*, probably because the surface is too uneven, and possibly also because the underlying rock is not of such a character as to facilitate the retention of water by embankments.

The southern valleys.

96. In the smaller valleys wedged in among the hill ranges to the south, the land consists principally of light sandy soil devoted to rice, but in the lowest lying portions black soil occurs, which is commonly embanked to retain water and grows wheat,

often after a crop of rice. These patches of black soil are the most valuable lands in the District, and holdings in which they occur are of much smaller size than the average. The land responds much more readily to good cultivation than that of the *havelī*, industry pays better, and the ryots are in consequence more industrious, more independent, and in better circumstances. Higher up the valleys the soil becomes more shallow and sandy, and here the villages are mostly in the hands of Gonds, who largely subsist on small millets grown on the stony hill-slopes. Rice is cultivated in lower lying land, but owing to the shallowness of the soil its out-turn is poor and very precarious.

Classification of soils.

97. In classifying the land for assessment purposes regard was paid first to the kind and quality of the soil, next to the class of cultivation for which it was suited, and lastly to differences in position which affected its productiveness.

Different soils.

98. A variety of different soils were distinguished. Good black soil was classed as *kābar* if of clayey and *mund* if of loamy texture each of these classes being subdivided into two grades. *Mund* is the commonest soil in the District, covering over 48 per cent. of the cultivated area, and nearly two-thirds of this is first-class *mund*. First-rate black soil or *kābar* occupies nearly 12 per cent of the cultivated area. An inferior kind of light coloured *kābar* was classed as *rathia*, the proportion of this soil being 7½ per cent. of the total. Poor soils other than those of a sandy type were styled *patarua*, a word in common use and signifying thin, in contradistinction to the term *motā* (fat) applied to good black soils. Within the *patarua* class land was subdivided into *mutbarrā* and *barrā* according as it contained or did not contain such an admixture of black soil as would enable it to grow inferior *rabi* crops. Next to *mund*, *patarua* is the commonest soil and occupies 29 per cent of the cultivated area, 12½ per cent being *mutbarrā* and 16½ per cent. *barrā*. Sandy soil formed

by the wearing of Vindhyan sandstone was classed as *sihār*, the term *domattā* being added if its value for rice production was lessened by an admixture of heavy soil. The quantity of *sihār* land is very small, amounting only to $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent of the total. Stony land on hillsides and slopes was classed as *bhatua*, the amount of this land being only one per cent of the total.

Classes of cultivation.

99. Each field was also classed according to the crops which it would grow, either as wheat land (*gohāri*), rice land (*dhanāhi*), minor crop land (*mutfarikāt*), or garden land (*bāri*). Land which will not grow wheat or rice is of much less value for this reason, and was rated considerably lower, as shown subsequently in the scale of soil factors.

Position-classes.

100. Lastly each field was entered in one of several position-classes. Land lying near the village site and manured by its drainage was classed as *geunrā* and the use of irrigation was also noted. These two distinctions affected all soil-classes. The other position-classes used differed according as the land was wheat, minor crop, or rice land. The distinctions recognised for wheat and minor crop land were *bandhwās* if embanked, *tagar* if in an open and ordinary position, *bharkīla* if cut up by water channels, and *ujarahā* if liable to damage from wild beasts. In the case of rice land the position-classes were *jhulān* if low-lying, *samān* if flat, and *tikrā* if high-lying; and rice land which could bear an after crop was classed higher in consequence, its value differing according as the after crop was wheat or a less important grain.

Areas of wheat, rice land, etc.

101. Taking the District as a whole 334,000 acres or 54 per cent of the cultivated area were classed as wheat land, 65,000 or 11 per cent as rice land, 197,000 or 32 per cent as minor crop land, and 13,000 or 2 per cent as garden land.

Distinctions of cultivation.

102. It may be explained that the differences in agricultural use which furnished the basis of classification are real differences in

the quality of the land, and not mere accidental variations in cropping. It is true that the distinction is drawn by means of the crops actually gathered. But the character of the cropping is used as a clue to differences which would otherwise elude observation, and not as affording in itself a justification of differences in valuation. When, for instance, rice is grown on soils of superior class, it indicates the existence of advantages for the collection and storage of drainage water, which warrant the assessment of such land at a rate considerably higher than if devoted to wheat, inasmuch as it can almost certainly bear a double crop. A favourable situation in respect of drainage, on the other hand, would not greatly increase the value of a wheat field unless it is able to bear a catch rain crop before the wheat, when its value is especially raised under a separate rule. Rice land is of course to be clearly recognised by the embankments which are practically necessary for rice cultivation. There is no such clearly marked sign of the difference between wheat and minor crop land, but it may be accepted as a fact that all land (other than rice or garden land) capable of bearing wheat, is cropped with wheat at some time or other, and that if the cultivator does not sow wheat, it is because the land has some defect which disables it from wheat-growing. There are of course numerous such defects, the existence of which cannot be detected apart from the cropping, and nothing gave the people more confidence in the land-classing than the separate classification and valuation of land which did not grow wheat, apart from any visible imperfection in its soil or surface.

Assessment by soil units.

103. For purposes of assessment each soil was given a factor of value, which again was raised or lowered according to the kind of cultivation for which the field was suited, and the advantages and disadvantages of position. This factor was considered to imply that an acre of the soil in question contained that number of soil units The method of assessment was to determine the amount which should be assessed on one soil unit according to the general scale by which the rental of the village

was to be raised. The amount thus assessed on one soil-unit was called the unit rate, and by multiplying the factor for any field by this unit rate, the equitable assessment or deduced rent of the field according to the new assessment was obtained. The soil factors therefore show the relative value of the different soils in the positions and according to the classes of cultivation distinguished, as mentioned above.

Soil factors.

104. The factors vary from group to group to some extent as the relative value of soils is not precisely the same in all parts of the District. The following, however, may be taken as the general or normal scale for land in the ordinary position :—

Soil.	WHEAT LAND.	RICE LAND	MINOR CROP LAND.	GARDEN LAND.
	Ordinary.	Samān (level).	Ordinary	Unirrigated.
	Acres.			
Kābar I ...	24	33 (Kābar I and II)	18	40 (all soils)
,, II ...	22		16	
Mund I ...	20	30	15	
,, II ...	18	27	12	
Rathia ...	16	15	9	
Patarua-mutbarrā ...	12	12 (Patarua-mutbarrā and Patarua-barrā)	8	
Patarua-barrā ...	...		4	
Bhatua ...	...	6	2	
Sihār ...	...	18	...	
Sihar-domattā ...	...	15	...	
Kachhār ...	20	...	...	

The factors given above were liable to great modification on account of the different positions, which increase or lower the outturn.

105. In the case of wheat land, embanked fields were rated at 50 per cent higher than those unembanked. The existence of an embankment is in Damoh an indication of special advantages in lie of surface which add materially to the outturn. Land classed as *bharkīla* or having a sloping surface and cut up by drainage channels was valued at 25 per cent below the ordinary rates. Land classed as *ujarahā* indicating that the crops were liable to damage from wild beasts, or that a considerable expenditure in fencing was necessary in order to protect them from wild beasts was rated at 50 per cent below the ordinary valuation. *Geunrā* land lying near the village site was rated 50 per cent above the valuation which it would otherwise have been given. For irrigable wheat land of whatever soil class a factor of 50 was taken. This represents an insufficient extra assessment as compared with the increase in produce, but the Settlement Officer exercised a proper leniency in the assessment of irrigation advantages. And no land was classed as irrigable unless it had been actually irrigated. The area classed as wheat land exceeded by 32 per cent the area on which wheat was actually grown during the year of survey, but this is not a larger difference than can be explained by ordinary rotation. Three-quarters of the wheat land fall into the two *mund* soil classes. The area of embanked wheat land is comparatively small in the typical groups of the *havelī* area such as Patharia and Hattā. On the other hand, it is as large as the unembanked area in hill-valley groups such as Abhāna and Jaberā. Taking all groups together, less than 12 per cent of the wheat area is embanked. One and a half per cent is classed as *geunrā*, 84 per cent as in the ordinary or *tagar* position, 2 per cent as *bharkīla*, and ½ per cent as *ujarahā*.

Allowances for position. Wheat land.

106. In the case of minor crop land the *geunrā* and *bharkīla* positions were recognised, and the same proportions added and deducted in valuation as those adopted for wheat land of these

Minor crop land.

descriptions except that the valuation of the two lowest soil classes, *patarua barrā*, and *bhatua* was doubled if in the *geunrā* position. Of the minor crop land 69 per cent is in the *patarua* soil-class, 30 per cent being *patarua mutbarrā*, and 39 per cent *patarua barrā*. 90 per cent of minor crop land is in the *tagar* or ordinary position, 3 per cent in the *bharkūla* position, and 7 per cent in the *geunrā* position.

107. In the area of rice land low-lying fields possessing very superior water advantages were classed as *jhilān*, and their valuation was raised by 33 per cent. On the other hand high-lying fields were classed as *tikrā*, and their valuation was lowered by 33 per cent. The valuation of irrigable rice land was raised by 25 per cent if in the *jhilān* or *samān* position classes, and by 50 per cent if in the *tikrā* position class. Here again no land was classed as irrigable which had not been actually irrigated. The valuation of rice land in the *geunrā* position was raised by 50 per cent in all soils superior to *bhatua* and in the case of *bhatua* was doubled. The valuation of rice land was further complicated by considerations based on after-cropping which is an indication of especially good quality. All rice land of the *kābar* and *mund* classes was assumed to be capable of bearing after crops and no addition was made on this account in their case if in the ordinary or *samān* position. If in the *tikrā* position fields of these classes were rated as *samān*, and if in the *jhilān* position the ordinary factors for this position were raised by 10 per cent. In the case of rice land of inferior soils which could be double-cropped, a special scale of factors was employed, raising the valuation by from 50 to 75 per cent. But land of these classes which bears double crops, usually only does so because it is in the *geunrā* area, and its valuation might well have been simplified by raising the percentage of increase in the factors for the *geunrā* position, instead of having a special set of factors for double-cropped land. The rice lands are practically confined to the hilly and hill-valley groups. Their total area exceeds by 25 per cent the area on which rice was

Rice land.

grown during the year of survey. Half the rice area is recorded as flat (*samān*), that is to say, as of medium quality. Low-lying rice lands (*jhīlān*) which are of much value constitute only 7 per cent, while poor high-lying fields account for 31 per cent of the whole area. The soil on which rice is most extensively grown is that termed *patarua barrā* which accounts for a third of the whole rice area. The soils next in importance for rice are *rathia* (24 per cent) and *patarua mutbarrā* (17 per cent). Pure *sihār* which is the rice soil *par excellence* contributes only 12 per cent.

Garden land.

108 For irrigable garden land a uniform factor of 50 was adopted, the same as that used for irrigable wheat land. For irrigated sugarcane fields which require a particularly abundant water-supply the factor was fixed at 60. These factors greatly underrate the value of irrigation, but, as stated above, it was an object to deal very leniently with irrigated land, as irrigation is but little practised in the District and requires encouragement. For unirrigated garden land a uniform factor of 40 was adopted whatever the soil might be. Such land was therefore considered slightly more valuable than embanked wheat and considerably less so than irrigated rice. Of the 13,000 acres classed as garden land, 1,400 were used at settlement for the production of sugarcane, while 76 per cent of the whole consisted of the small unirrigated vegetable and maize gardens attached to houses, which in Gond villages are often the most valued part of the cultivation. The quality of the soil is of little importance in such land compared with the position, as these small gardens naturally receive a large quantity of manure and drainage.

STATISTICS OF CULTIVATION.

General statistics of cultivation.

109. Of[1] the total area of the District in 1903-04, 792 square miles or 28 percent were included in Government forest, 359 square miles or 13 per cent were classed

[1] The above statistics are for the year 1903-04.

as not available for cultivation, and 563 square miles[1] or 20 per cent as culturable waste other than fallow. The remaining area amounting to just over 700,000 acres or nearly 1,100 square miles and being equivalent to 39 per cent of the total area of the District, or 54 per cent excluding Government forest, was occupied for cultivation. The percentage of occupied area is somewhat higher in Hattā tahsīl where it is 55, than in Damoh with 52. This is because Hạttā includes a smaller proportion of the hilly country which occupies so large an area in the District. Cultivation is closest in the Sonār valley where 60 per cent of the available area is occupied, the proportion rising to 65 per cent in the Batiāgarh group.

Progress of cultivation.

110. During the 25 years which elapsed between the settlement of 1863-64 and the survey on which the statistics of the recent settlement were based (1888-89), the area occupied for cultivation increased by 118,000 acres or 19½ per cent on the figure of 603,000 acres of the previous settlement, and amounted to 721,000 acres in the latter year. The maximum area recorded as occupied was 739,000 acres in 1894-95, and the area for 1903-04 showed a decrease of 36,000 acres on this. The minimum figure recorded since 1891 was 661,000 acres in 1899-1900, and the last four years up to 1903-04 witnessed a steady recovery. It is doubtful whether there is scope for any very considerable increase in future, as little good land now remains unoccupied. The cultivation of the small millets on hillsides might, it is true, be spread indefinitely, but this is only possible by the destruction of forest growth which is to be deprecated in the interest of the country at large, and will be checked by the rules for the management of private forests issued under the Land Revenue Act A large proportion of the land newly occupied is of very poor quality and the area of new fallow increased considerably between the two settlements. But the area actually under crop

1 Excludes old fallow which is included in occupied area.

increased by 27 per cent or in a larger ratio than the occupied area, owing to the cultivation by ryots of waste land included in their holdings. The increase in cropping due to this cause was very large in some of the open portions of the District, where the waste land included in holdings at the former settlement was of good soil. Thus in the Patharia group the cropped area increased by 34 per cent and that occupied by 9 per cent only, and similar figures for Batiāgarh were 25 per cent and 9 per cent. This was counterbalanced in the more hilly tracts by an increase of occupied area of which a large proportion was new fallow. Between the 30 years' settlement and last settlement the cropped area increased by 30 per cent, while wheat (including wheat-gram) showed an increase of 19 per cent and rice of 76 per cent. Linseed was very little grown at the 30 years' settlement as there was no demand for export.

Fallows.

111. Of the total occupied area of 721,000 acres nearly 2 lakhs of acres or 25 per cent were under fallow at last settlement (1889-90). Fourteen per cent of this was old fallow[1] and 11 per cent new fallow.[2] In 1903-04 the fallow was 210,000 acres or an increase of nearly 30,000 acres on the settlement figure. The increase is entirely in old fallow and represents land overgrown by *kāns* grass (*Saccharum spontaneum*). There is always a considerable area of new fallow in the hilly tracts where the land requires a periodical rest. Here a quarter of the occupied area is sometimes new fallow, while in the *havelī* the proportion sinks to 2 or 3 per cent. But the area of old fallow or waste held by ryots is as large in the open country as in the hills. The large amount of waste included in holdings is a very distinctive feature of the Saugor and Damoh Districts, and is stated to be due to the prevalence of *kāns* grass, which periodically infests the land and cannot be eradicated till it has run its course,

1 Three years and over.

2 Fallow of under three years.

often involving a fallow of 7 or 8 or in some cases even of 10 or 12 years. The injury caused by this deep-rooted weed was in former years a serious problem in the administration not only of these Districts but in the neighbouring ones of Bundelkhand, and to it has been freely ascribed the depressed condition of these localities in the past. Mr. Fuller, however, was of opinion that *kāns* only gained a footing in the land of bad cultivators, and that its prevalence was the result rather than the cause of misfortune. It was undoubtedly becoming less common at settlement, and, as has already been noticed, much of the increase in cropping was obtained by reduction of the waste land in holdings, that is to say, by reducing the margin formerly held necessary for *kāns* fallows. The series of bad years since settlement has naturally counteracted this tendency, and caused a great deal of land to be again overgrown.

Cropped area.

112. The total cropped area at last settlement was 547,000 acres, of which 13,000 acres were double-cropped. In 1903-04 the cropped area was 514,000 acres showing a decrease of 34,000 acres on the settlement figure. The lowest level was reached in 1898-99 with 417,000 acres, while a maximum of 586,000 acres was recorded in 1893-94, 30,000 acres of this being double-cropped. The District has therefore still a considerable amount of leeway to make up before reaching the level of cropping which existed before the famines.

Double-cropping.

113. The area double-cropped varies greatly with the character of the season, and, if the autumn rains fail, shrinks into insignificance. The maximum area recorded was 30,000 acres in 1894-95 and the minimum 3,000 acres in 1899-1900. Double-cropping is practically confined to embanked fields in the rice tracts, wheat, linseed or gram being sown as a second crop after the rice has been cut, or a catch crop of rice being taken in embanked wheat fields during the rains.

Statistics of crops.

114. In 1893-94[1] wheat covered 245,000 acres or 42 per cent of the cropped area, rice 75,000 or 13 per cent, kodon-kutkī 56,000 or 9½ per cent, gram 52,000 or 9 per cent, linseed 38,000 or 6½ per cent, juār 35,000 or 6 per cent, and til 26,000 or 4 per cent. The corresponding figures for 1903-04 were wheat 174,000 acres or 34 per cent of the cropped area, kodon-kutkī 67,000 or 13 per cent, rice 51,000 or 10 per cent, til 51,000 or 10 per cent, juār 48,000 or 9 per cent, gram 45,000 or 9 per cent and linseed 29,000 or 6 per cent. The effect of the famines is evidenced by the figures, the area under wheat having shrunk by 71,000 acres or 29 per cent, and that under rice by 24,000 acres or 32 per cent, while the less valuable crops of juār and kodon-kutki show an increase. The lowest point touched by wheat was 49,000 acres in 1896-97, but this was because much of the land was too dry to be sown in that year. The last three years have witnessed a steady recovery in the wheat area. The acreage of juār is now treble what it was at the beginning of the nineties. Another noticeable feature is the steady growth in popularity of til, partly at the expense of linseed. The former oilseed is a less troublesome and risky crop to cultivate, and is now grown for export. The practice of sowing wheat mixed with gram has greatly increased in recent years, the settlement figure being 52,000 acres and that for 1903-04 127,000 acres. As explained subsequently the mixture of gram is advantageous to the soil, but the increase is probably rather due to the fact that the cultivators cannot at present afford sufficient seed for wheat alone, and the combined crop is cheaper to sow. In 1893-94 spring crops covered roughly three-fifths and autumn crops two-fifths of the cropped area, but in 1903-04 the proportions were nearly equal.

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[1] The figures of 1893-94 are quoted here in place of the settlement figures as they probably represent the highwater mark of prosperity to which the District attained.

CROPS.

115. Wheat (*Triticum sativum*) has always been the staple crop, covering half the cropped area at the 30 years' settlement, two-fifths at the last settlement, and a third in 1903-04. Three varieties are grown in the District—*kathia*, *jalāliyā* and *pissī*. *Pissī* is a soft small-grained wheat, and is grown for the export trade. It is of two kinds, *shikarhai* or bearded and *mundī* or plain. *Shikarhai* is the commoner variety and less liable to be damaged by wild animals. *Mundī* is grown in embanked fields as it requires more moisture and is less liable to rust. *Kathia* is a reddish hard grain and was the most popular one before the growth of the export trade, but it is of no value for the European market and has therefore been supplanted by *pissī*. It does better than the other wheats in a dry year. *Jalāliyā* is a yellowish grain softer than *kathia* but harder than *pissi*. It is preferred by native consumers.

Wheat—Varieties.

116. The *hal* or regular plough is not used at all as a rule in the preparation of land for wheat, but one ploughing with the *bakhar* or paring-plough is given before the rains break, and five or six more before the time of sowing. The *hal* is only used if the field is overgrown with weeds or *kāns* grass. Sowing takes place in October and the beginning of November when the cold weather has set in, and the harvest lasts from the 15th March to the 15th April. Wheat is often sown mixed with gram in the proportion of 5, 10 or 15 per cent of the latter grain. The proportions in which the combined crop is divided for the agricultural returns are 85 and 15. A field of mixed wheat and gram is called 'birrā.' This practice obtains principally in the open unembanked fields of the Sonār valley. The admixture of gram diminishes the exhausting effect of cropping, as plants of the pea tribe are able to assimilate nitrogen from the soil. In the embanked fields of the south wheat is commonly sown alone, because the retention of the surface water causes the deposit of the manurial substances

Methods of cultivation.

contained in it, and the field can therefore bear a wheat crop. Frequently it has also received a dressing of manure for the catchcrop of rice which precedes wheat in embanked fields.

Manuring and embankments.

117. Unembanked wheat fields are rarely manured, and the experiments conducted on the Nāgpur Farm have demonstrated that taking one year with another it is unprofitable to apply manure to them unless wheat is grown in rotation with an autumn crop. If the manure is applied to open wheat fields before the rains it is washed out of the ground unless there is an autumn crop to fix it. And if it is applied after the rains, it does not dissolve unless the winter rains are unusually copious and is as likely as not to damage the crop by attracting white ants.[1] The practice of embanking fields is very rare in the Sonār valley, in strong contrast with the Jubbulpore *havelī.* For embanking fields on all sides a flatter surface is required than is generally found in the Damoh *havelī,* and it seems not unlikely also that the successful retention of water by tanks depends in some measure on the character of the underlying rock, and that this fact would give the clue to the prevalence of embankments in some localities and their absence in others. Banks to prevent erosion or surface drainage at the lower end of a field are now made pretty generally, and their construction has undoubtedly been stimulated by the encouragement given to this form of improvement by Government. In the smaller valleys wedged in among the hill ranges to the south embanked fields are not uncommon. These valleys largely consist of light sandy soils devoted to the growth of rice, but in the lowest portions black soil occurs, and is embanked to grow wheat, often after a crop of rice. Such land is the most valuable in the District.

Diseases.

118. Rust or *gerua* is the most common disease to which wheat is subject and is produced by rainy or cloudy weather especially

[1] These sentences taken from Mr. Fuller's Report may be considered as open to question.

if it occurs early in the cold season before the plants have come into ear. The grain turns a yellowish red. The progress of rust is very rapid, a whole field being destroyed in a single night. Heavy winds occurring when wheat-plants are coming into ear are liable to shrivel the grain. Wheat is less liable to damage by *tusār* or frost than other grains, but hoar-frost sometimes dries up the ears or makes them very small, when they are called *jhirī*. Sharp frost is often experienced at nights, especially in the hill-valleys, and if occurring late in the season while the wheat is in flower may turn a promising crop into absolute failure. Mr. Fuller himself saw the people cutting wheat full grown and apparently ripening for harvest as fodder for their cattle, the ears containing not a single grain, owing to the destruction of the flowers by a night's frost. *Kuhar* or smut is caused by wet weather when the plant is in flower, the flowers rotting and dropping off. This disease is very rare. In very dry weather the roots of the plants are attacked by white ants; this is called *okrā*. Hailstorms occurring when wheat is in ear sometimes destroy the whole crop. Violent hailstorms are not infrequent about spring time, and there is a tract towards the north of the District which seems peculiarly liable to them. This tract is north-east of a line drawn from Hattā to Bandhā and comprises the large villages of Bhainsa, Hinotā Kalān, Gaisābād and Raneh. Suspensions of revenue have several times been given in these villages for damage by hail, and if the sky has a stormy appearance about harvest-time the crops are sometimes cut before they are ripe for the sickle. An allowance was made in the assessment of this tract at last settlement for its liability to damage from hail.

Seed and outturn.

119. The seed sown to an acre of wheat is 100 lbs., and the standard outturn is 580 lbs. or 20 lbs. less than in Saugor, and 60 lbs. less than in Jubbulpore. The usual practice is to talk of a *mānī* (480 lbs.) of wheat as being sown in 4 acres, which would

give 120 lbs. an acre In this calculation, however, the gifts to village servants and farm-servants are included.

Gram.

120. Gram (*Cicer arietinum*) occupies only from 6 to 12 per cent of the cropped area, and is much less grown in Damoh than in Saugor. It is sown in poor soil (*mutbarrā patarua*) which will not grow wheat, and is grown mixed with wheat in the *havelī*, and also as a second crop after rice. It is sometimes sown mixed with linseed in the proportion of one-fifth. It is sown at the same time as wheat and ripens 10 or 15 days earlier. Sixty lbs. of seed go to an acre and the standard outturn is 450 lbs.

Linseed.

121. Linseed (*Linum usitatissimum*) occupies from 3 to 6 per cent of the cropped area. Its cultivation greatly increased in popularity in the early nineties owing to the European demand. Recently, however, it has again declined owing partly to the bad harvests which have been experienced, and partly to the rivalry of til, which is now also grown for export. Linseed is grown on wheat land and occasionally as an after-crop to rice. The standard outturn per acre is 300 lbs.

Rice.

122. Rice (*Oryza sativa*) occupies from 10 to 12 per cent of the cropped area, and ranks next in importance to wheat, though the actual area under it is less than that of kodon-kutkī. It is principally grown in the hilly country in the south of the Damoh tahsīl, and not much in Hattā. There are many varieties of the seed, the best being that called *Antarved* which is soft and has a special flavour. It is grown on the poor *patarua* and *rathia* soils and also on *sihār* or the regular sandy rice land, but this is not plentiful. It is also sown in embanked black-soil fields as a catchcrop before wheat. It is almost entirely grown from broadcast seed, the area of transplanted rice being quite insignificant. Two systems of cultivation are followed called *machowā* and *topā*. The first is applied to the better class of fields. The

land is ploughed with the *hal* or regular plough two or three times before and after the rains have broken, and when the soil has been reduced to slush the seed is sown about a month after the beginning of the rains, and the *bakhar* is then dragged over the field to press down the seed. After this process the crop must be once weeded. On stony and hilly land where this method is impracticable the *topā* system is followed, the field being simply ploughed and the seed sown after the first rain. The crop will then probably require to be weeded twice. Rice land responds well to manure, and the cultivator gives it a dressing every third year if he can afford it. There is practically no regular irrigation of the crop. Rice is liable to the attacks of the *ghorī* or horse-worm which sucks up the milk while the ear is forming. One hundred and twenty lbs. of seed are sown to the acre, and the standard outturn is 800 lbs. of unhusked, yielding 480 lbs. of husked rice. The standard outturn fixed is probably rather low, but on the other hand the people do not consider the return of husked rice to be more than 50 per cent of the weight of unhusked grain, the small excess over this amount being expended on wages for husking.

Kodon-kutkī.

123. The small millets *kodon* (*Paspalum scrobiculatum*) and *kutkī* (*Panicum psilopodium*) cover from 10 to 14 per cent. of the cropped area. They are the favourite food of the Gonds and are mainly grown in tracts inhabited by them. They are sown in the poor *patarua* and *bhatua* soils, kutkī being grown on even inferior land to kodon. The poor soils on which they grow require resting fallows after two years' cropping. Kodon and kutkī are sown in alternation with each other and also with til. Kodon is the more important grain. Both are sown broadcast, the land being first ploughed once or twice, and the bakhar being dragged over the field after the seed has been sown to press it in. Kodon is sown at the beginning of the rains and ripens after rice, while kutkī is sown at the end of August and ripens in six weeks or two months.

Kutkī is attacked by the *ghorī* or horse-fly and kodon by the *agia* plant (*Striga lutea*). Fifteen to 20 lbs. of kodon are sown to the acre and the standard outturn is 450 lbs. of unhusked yielding 250 lbs. of husked grain. In the case of kutkī both the quantity of seed-grain and outturn appear to be somewhat greater.

Juār.

124. *Juār* (*Sorghum vulgare*) occupied only about 5 to 6 per cent of the cropped area in the early nineties, but during the famines it was more largely cultivated and in 1902-03 the area under it was 71,000 acres or 13½ per cent. of the total. This increase was mainly at the expense of wheat, for which many tenants could not afford the seed-grain, and with the return of better seasons a fall of over 20,000 acres in juār and a rise of 40,000 acres in the wheat area took place in 1903-04. Juār is principally sown in the *havelī* and in *geunrā* land in the hilly country. A large proportion of it is grown on very poor soil. The land is not very carefully prepared, and the seed is sown at the first break of the rains before rice. The crop is weeded by hand with a hoe, and the harvest takes place at the end of December and the beginning of January. The stalks are cut off half-way down and the lower half left standing in the field, much of their value for fodder being thus lost. In wet weather juār is attacked by *kandua* or smut which turns the grain black. When the rainfall is heavy the seed sometimes rots in the ground, or the leaves are attacked by green flies when the plant is coming into pod. This disease is called *bhinkā*. *Durkā* is a black worm or caterpillar which attacks the stalks. In a very dry year the weed *agia* (*Striga lutea*) springs up in the field and causes the juār to wither. From 10 to 15 lbs. of seed are sown to the acre and the standard outturn is 500 lbs.

Til.

125. *Til* (*Sesamum indicum*) has largely increased in popularity during the last decade and now covers over 50,000 acres or 10 per cent of the cropped area. It is only grown as a rain

crop in Damoh and there are two varieties with black and white seeds. The black-seeded variety is sometimes grown on black soil or on *kachhār* land, and both kinds are grown on poor soil with the hill millets. Til is not a crop which requires much care and is frequently sown on newly broken up and imperfectly cleared land. The stalks and leaves afford some assistance to the soil in the nature of manure. The seed is sown in July and the crop matures in November, the white-seeded variety being ready first. Two or 3 lbs. of seed are sown to the acre and the standard outturn is 150 lbs. Til does well in a dry year but may be injured by heavy rain before the plants have come into pod. Ramtilli or jagnī which is a favourite crop in Saugor is scarcely known in Damoh.

Sugarcane.

126. Sugarcane (*Saccharum officinarum*) occupied 1,000 acres at the last settlement, but in 1903-04 the area under it was less than 200 acres. It was formerly a comparatively important crop as evidenced by the stone crushing mills which may now be seen lying disused. Local production has declined before the competition of imported sugar with which it cannot compete in price. Most of the crop is grown without irrigation, the canes being sown in whole lengths, and the ground covered with leaves and brushwood to check evaporation on the Bundelkhand system known as *palwār*. The villages of Semrā, Bānsa Kalān, and Pindrai in the Damoh tahsīl are centres of sugarcane cultivation.

Minor crops.

127. Very little cotton is grown in the District, the rainfall being too heavy for it. The area under it varies from 3,000 to 5,000 acres. The outturn adopted is 150 lbs. of uncleaned cotton. Hemp is scarcely grown at all. Seventy acres are cropped with *ambāri* or Bombay hemp (*Hibiscus cannabinus*). The pulses masūr or lentil, arhar, urad, and tiurā and lākh cover a few thousand acres each, the most important being masūr with which nearly 8,000 acres were cropped at settlement. Arhar has an area varying from 3,000 to 6,000 acres and urad and

tiurā of less than this. Betelvine gardens cover 30 acres, Damoh, Hindoria and Raneh being the chief centres of cultivation. *Al* or Indian madder (*Morinda citrifolia*) was formerly grown somewhat extensively by Baniās and Kāchhis, but the area under it is now only 100 acres, as there is little demand for it as a dyeing agent. Yams or sweet potatoes are an important garden crop covering 600 acres. They are sown on *kachhar* land along the banks of rivers, and a considerable quantity are grown in Hattā. Ordinary potatoes are also grown. The other principal vegetables are brinjals, radishes, beans and *methī* (*Trigonella fœnum græcum*). *Singhāra* or water-nut is grown to a considerable extent in the tanks, especially in Damoh town and the villages of Patharia, Bānsa and Akherā. It flowers during the rainy season and produces small dark-brown triangular nuts. The kernel is white, sweetish and farinaceous and is much esteemed, and eaten both raw and cooked. The nut is exported to Jubbulpore and the United Provinces from Damoh.

Total value of crops.

128. The statement on the following page shows the value of the gross agricultural produce of the District, taking the standard outturn of crops on the area cropped in 1903-04, valued according to the retail prices obtaining in that year. A comparison of this statement with the one given on page 15 of Mr. Fuller's Settlement Report is of some interest. The total value of a normal harvest on the cropped area of 1903-04 was nearly Rs. 62½ lakhs, while at the time of settlement it amounted to a little over Rs. 54 lakhs. In 1902-03 the total value of a normal harvest was nearly Rs. 71 lakhs. Although the area under crop has thus decreased by 6 per cent since the year of attestation (1888-89) the value of the produce is higher by 13 per cent owing to the rise in prices. Curiously enough the result of a similar comparison in Saugor is exactly the reverse, the value of a normal harvest in 1903-04 being very much less than at the previous settlement. The explanation is that in Damoh the attestation for the

Details of crops.	Area (1903-04).	Standard outturn per acre.	Gross Produce.	Value rate per rupee 1903-04).	Gross value.	Value of crop on one acre.		
	Thousands of acres	lbs.	Thousands of lbs.	lbs.	Thousands of rupees.	Rs.	a.	p.
Wheat	155	580	90,053	33	2,729	17	9	3
Gram	45	450	20,278	48	422	9	6	0
Rice (cleaned) ..	51	480	24,609	21	1,172	22	13	9
Juar	49	500	24,171	51	474	9	12	10
Linseed	48	250	11,998	24	500	10	6	8
Til	51	150	7,610	24	317	6	4	0
Cotton (cleaned) ..	3	45	113	4	28	11	4	0
Kodon (cleaned) ..	67	250	16,826	50	337	5	0	0
Minor food-grains ..	21	320	6,803	64	107	5	0	0
Gardens	2	..	..	..	44	20	0	0
Miscellaneous non-food crops	21	..	..	..	105	5	0	0
Sugarcane (gur) ..	·170	1,200	204	20	10	60	0	0
Miscellaneous food-crops	·467	320	149	64	2	5	0	0
Total ..	514	..	202,814	..	6,247	..		

settlement was carried out six years earlier than in Saugor, and prices were consequently much lower This fact did not,

however, lead to any differentiation in the rent-rates assessed for the two Districts, which are very nearly equal.

Agricultural implements

129. The principal agricultural implements are the following:—The *hal* or *nāgar* is employed for deep ploughing and the *bakhar* or paring-plough for ordinary preparation of a field. The *nāgar* has a pointed spike with which the furrow is made, and the *bakhar* a horizontal blade 4 inches wide and 20 inches long which scrapes up the earth. The *nāri* is a smaller plough than the *hal* but has a longer spike. It is used for sowing and a bamboo tube trails behind it by a string through which the seed is dropped into the furrow. *Paraina* is the goad pointed at one end and with a flat piece of iron at the other for cleaning the earth off the *hal* or *bakhar*. The ploughshare is called *phār* and the share of the *nāri* is *phār* or *kusia*. The strip of iron attached to the *bakhar* is known as *pāns*. The pole to which the yoke is fixed is *harīs*, and the handle of the plough is *muthia* and that of the *bakhar*, *nijonā*. *Jua* is the yoke which is in two pieces, one of which goes over the neck of the bullocks and the other under. *Pācha* is a rake with five spikes used for drawing the grain into the winnowing baskets after it has been threshed. *Obī* is the spud used for fencing the threshing-floor. *Hansia* is a sickle, *kulhādi* an axe, *kodāli* a pickaxe, and *phaorā* or *khurpī* a hoe.

Manure.

130. Manure is little used except for rice and garden crops. In rice-growing villages manure is valued, especially for fields which bear after crops, and for which a dressing is very desirable. This, however, does not prevent the people from using as fuel most of the cattle dung which accumulates during the dry months of the year, when fuel-cakes can be made, though supplies of firewood may be readily obtainable close at hand. The people state that firewood alone is unsuitable for cooking purposes, though a certain amount is always required to mix with the fuel cakes. Broadly speaking only the cattle dung which accumulates during the rainy season is saved for

manuring purposes, and it unfortunately happens that at this season a large proportion of the cattle are away grazing in the hills. As already stated it is of little use to manure wheat land unless an autumn crop can be grown either before or in rotation with the wheat.[1] The rainfall of Damoh is too heavy to permit of the growth on deep black soil of autumn crops other than rice, and rice cannot be grown without embankments, for which the country is apparently unsuited by the slope of its surface, and which at all events are not made. The rotation of autumn with spring crops is generally impossible, and in consequence the lands are rarely manured.

IRRIGATION.

Irrigation.

131. The area irrigated averages only about 2,000 acres and is insignificant. 3,500 acres were recorded as irrigated at last settlement (1889-90), but this figure apparently includes all land irrigated at one time or another, as the maximum area recorded in any other year was 2,461 acres in 1892-93. A very little wheat is irrigated from wells primarily constructed for sugarcane, and a somewhat larger area of rice; in the year of settlement 1,400 acres of rice or 2 per cent of the total area were shown as receiving a supply of water. But this is much more than is irrigated in a normal year. The remaining area comprises the vegetable gardens irrigated from wells by members of the Kāchhi caste. Three hundred tanks were recorded as existing in the District at settlement, but of these less than 20 are ordinarily used for irrigation. There are some 700 durable and 300 temporary wells, and these supply on an average something over an acre each. The cost of a durable well is estimated at about Rs. 300, and the average depth is 25 to 30 feet. Temporary wells are not very successful owing to the friable nature of the soil. The system of embanking fields in order to hold up the surface water during

[1] This statement, made on the authority of Mr. Fuller's Report, may be considered as open to question in view of the more recent experience of the Agricultural Department.

the monsoon is a kind of irrigation and nearly 40,000 acres of wheat land were recorded as embanked at settlement. The embanked fields are as already stated mainly to be found in the small valleys to the south,[1] and the principal wheat-growing area of the *havelī* or Sonār valley has practically no embanked fields. It has been surmised that the surface is too sloping to permit of regular embanked fields being constructed as in Jubbulpore. A large proportion of the embanked fields in the south bear two crops.

CATTLE.

Cattle—Breeds.

132. Most of the cattle used in the District are bred locally, though the richer cultivators buy imported animals of the Gwalior and Bhopāl breeds and from the Ken river valley in Pannā State. The large white cattle from Bhopāl are called Sankhā bullocks, and those from Pannā, Kenia bullocks. The prevailing colour of the Damoh breed is light grey and animals of this colour are preferred. They are small animals of no particular quality but are suited to the stony and rocky ground on which imported cattle do not do so well Special bulls are not usually kept for breeding, which is carried on indiscriminately from the young bullocks before castration. The practice of letting loose a bull on the death of a high caste Hindu was formerly in vogue. These bulls were held sacred and allowed to wander where they pleased and they thus served to some extent for breeding purposes. But cultivators would not now endure the damage to crops caused by these animals, and they would be sent to the pound and bought up by the butchers for slaughter. The custom of letting them loose has therefore died out. Occasionally when a cultivator has a strong steer he keeps him for a year or two extra before gelding him and gets calves from him. But he does not let him out to other cultivators as there is no practice of giving money for the

[1] See under Soils and Wheat.

services of bulls. Only one landowner is known to keep a special bull for breeding. The price of an indigenous pair of local plough-cattle is Rs. 25 in the hilly tracts and Rs. 50 in the *havelī* when they are fit for work. Gwalior or Sankhā bullocks may cost from Rs. 100 to Rs. 200 a pair. The Ken valley breed are somewhat more expensive than those bred locally. The working life of a pair of local bullocks is seven or eight years from the time they are trained to cultivation, and those of the imported breeds last two or three years longer. The Ken valley breed is the most popular of those imported. Animals are castrated when they are three or four years old either by the tenants themselves or by Chamārs. The testicles are tied up and then rubbed with ashes and pounded to pulp with a stone. The animal is ill for a week or a fortnight, and is not put to work for two months. Nose-strings are not used for plough or cart-work, but a cord is tied round the forehead below the horns. The people say that the use of nose-strings tends to weaken the animal, but this is of course a delusion. The driver has thus very little control over cart-bullocks, and cannot stop or turn them easily.

Food and grazing.

133. No food is usually given to cattle except grass and wheat chaff and rice straw in the hot weather, sometimes with a mixture of mahuā flowers Oilcake is only given to cart-bullocks. A good deal of juār is grown but little use is made of the stalks for fodder. Cattle are usually sent to the forests in the rains especially from the black-soil tracts, where their feet sink into the soft ground and they are tormented by flies. When required for cultivation the plough-bullocks are sent for. Cattle from the *havelī* are sent to the south-western hills for grazing. The bulk of the cattle go to Government forest.

Cows.

134. Cows are kept for milk and cow's milk is drunk, probably because it is not rich enough for the manufacture of *ghī*. An ordinary cow only gives one or two pounds of milk a day and costs

from Rs. 5 to Rs. 15, while the best ones go up to Rs. 25. In 1903-04 there were 103,000 bulls and bullocks and 98,000 cows in the District. This gave a pair of bullocks to every 11 acres in cultivation and 87 cows to a village or more than one to each householder.

Buffaloes.

135. Buffaloes are kept by mālguzārs and large tenants, but are not used for cultivation. The she-buffaloes are valued for their milk from which *ghi* is made. The young males or *parās* are disposed of very cheaply to the caste of Basdewās who drive them in large herds to Chhattīsgarh and sell them for cultivation. The male calves are said to be very delicate and difficult to rear, but this is probably because no attention is paid to them. Barren cows are used as pack-animals. A she-buffalo may cost from Rs. 15 to Rs. 60. The best ones give six or eight lbs. of milk when they are fed on oil-cake. A buffalo in calf gives milk for a year and is then dry for another year, the intervals for a cow being eight or nine months. The number of cow buffaloes in 1903-04 was 38,000 which was exceeded only in Saugor, Jubbulpore and Chānda, and was at the rate of more than one to every householder.

Ponies.

136. Ponies are bred in the District but to a much less extent than formerly, when nearly every landowner kept a mare for riding. Tonga-ponies were also bred locally and sent to Jubbulpore for sale. Breeding has almost died out since the famines, and those who require horses now purchase them from Baluchis or the cast horses of the cavalry and artillery in Saugor. Ponies bred locally are used by Baniās for the carriage of grain and *ghī* (clarified butter), and such animals cost from Rs. 15 to Rs. 30. A breeding stallion was until recently kept by Government, but the results obtained were very poor, and it has been decided not to maintain one in future. The number of horses and ponies in 1903-04 was nearly 5,000 or over four to a village on an average.

137. Sheep are kept only by the Gadaria or shepherd caste and are not very numerous, while goats are kept by them and also by Muhammadans and low caste Hindus. No use is made of their manure for agriculture, but the Kumhārs use it for making tiles. Most goats are kept in the Hattā tahsīl, and the village of Mariādoh is especially a centre for them. Goats are kept mainly for food, and are sent to Jubbulpore for sale. Their milk is also drunk and sold to the Halwais or confectioners. Blankets are made from the wool of sheep and sold to all agriculturists. The price of a goat is from Rs 2 to Rs. 5 and of a sheep from Re. 1 to Rs. 3. In 1903-04 there were 15,000 sheep and 29,000 goats.

Goats and sheep.

138. Donkeys are only kept by Gadherā Kumhārs, Khatīks or vegetable-sellers, Dhobīs and Sunkars and Beldārs or masons, and are used for the carriage of their stock-in-trade, as grain, clothes, lime, earth, bricks and tiles and vegetables. The donkey makes a very good beast of burden and costs from Rs. 8 to Rs. 15. The milk is not drunk but is sometimes given as medicine to children. The donkey is impure, and is the animal on which Sītala, the goddess of small-pox, rides, and no Hindus other than the above castes will keep him. A Kumhār will ride a donkey but will get off for shame if he sees anyone coming; and it is a proverb that 'A Kumhār will ride a donkey of his own accord but not if you ask him to.' In 1903-04 the District contained over 1,900 donkeys or a larger number than most others

Donkeys.

139. The local names of the common diseases of cattle are *māta* and *chechak* for rinderpest, *baikarā* for foot-and-mouth disease, *bhaonrā*, *ghatsarap* or *mindaria* for anthrax, and *sunkā* for pleuro-pneumonia. Rinderpest is common, and buffaloes suffer more from it than cattle. The animals generally die within a week of being attacked, and if they live to 12 days will probably survive. For treatment they are fed on

Cattle-disease.

gram flour and curds and given linseed oil to drink, while the owner endeavours to propitiate Devī. Foot-and-mouth disease is not usually fatal. The animal is tied up near water so that its feet stand in the mud. Linseed oil is applied to the mouth, and coal-tar and *dīkāmāli* gum, or lime and tobacco, or a decoction of nīm-seeds powdered and boiled in linseed oil is rubbed into the ulcerated parts of the feet. The disease more commonly attacks the feet. The different forms of anthrax are considered locally as different diseases. It is called *bhaonrā* when the head gets giddy and the animal runs in circles, and *ghatsarap* or *mindaria* when the throat is swollen. The latter form is said to be comparatively rare. The local remedy is to brand the throat with a hot iron, but the disease is nearly always fatal. The beginning of the rains is the most unhealthy time for cattle, when they eat the green rank grass, and plough-bullocks are said to succumb more frequently than others. A veterinary dispensary has recently been opened by the District Council at Damoh.

Cattle-markets.

140. No cattle-fairs are held in the District, and Damoh town has the only weekly cattle-market. The people go to the fairs of Garhākotā and Kiljīpur in Gwalior and to the Khurai market in Saugor. Numbers of old and worn-out cattle are driven for sale to Garhākotā, and though the people know that they will be slaughtered, most castes do not object to selling them.

CHAPTER V.

LOANS, PRICES, WAGES, MANUFACTURES, TRADE AND COMMUNICATIONS.

LOANS

Land Improvement and Agricultural Loans.

141. Advances under the Land Improvement Loans Act have been insignificant except during the four years 1896—1900 when money was given out under special conditions for the purpose of providing labour during the famines. Between 1871 and 1896 only a little over Rs. 2,000 was advanced altogether. During the next four years Rs. 78,000 were advanced, Rs. 58,000 of this being distributed in 1897-98. This amount of Rs. 58.000 and Rs. 7,000 in the other years were distributed as famine loans without interest, and with the promise of remission of part of the principal on condition that they were properly expended. Since 1900 again advances have become insignificant, the maximum amount given out in 1902-03 being Rs. 400. Out of a total sum of Rs. 81,000 advanced between 1871 and 1903, Rs. 47,000 have been recovered, Rs. 12,000 remitted and Rs. 22,000 are outstanding. The bulk of the loans bore no interest, but something under Rs. 3,000 on account of interest has been recovered. Agricultural loans were first given out on a large scale to meet the scarcity of 1894. Between 1881 and 1893 Rs. 28,000 were advanced, Rs. 11,000 being given out in 1888 in consequence of a partial failure of the wheat harvest in that year. Printed leaflets were on this occasion distributed to the people setting out the terms on which loans were to be obtained In 1893-94 Rs. 17,000 were advanced, and this was followed by a distribution of Rs. 2·27 lakhs in 1894-95. This measure must have been a substantial alleviation of the very real distress which was prevalent in that year. A further sum of Rs. 3·32

lakhs was distributed in the years 1896—98 and Rs. 64,000 in 1899-1900. Between 1901 and 1903 practically nothing was advanced. The total sum advanced between 1881 and 1903 was Rs. 7·38 lakhs; out of this Rs. 3·22 lakhs have been recovered, Rs. 2·80 lakhs remitted and Rs. 1·36 lakhs are outstanding. Rupees 77,000 have been recovered as interest and Rs. 70,000 remitted. Since 1897, 318 sanads or certificates have been granted for the improvement of land and other works of public utility, 205 being given in the Hattā tahsil and 113 in the Damoh tahsil. Of these, 243 were given for small field embankments, 38 for large embankments or *bandhias*, 6 for the construction or improvement of tanks and 31 for wells.

Rate of interest on private loans.

142. The ordinary rate of interest on private loans in cash is 12 to 18 per cent for large sums or on mortgage of property and 24 per cent for small sums not secured. For very small debts for a few months, the rate may be 50 or 75 per cent. For loans of the spring grains for seed the ordinary rate of interest is *sawai* or 25 per cent for the period between seed-time and harvest, and occasionally 50 per cent to a new borrower in the first year. The rate for rice is 50 per cent and for seed for the other autumn crops 100 per cent. The amount of seed required for these, however, is so small that they are not usually dealt in by the regular moneylenders and are frequently lent by the cultivators to each other. In the case of loans for subsistence while the crop is in the ground the price of the grain is fixed in money, and interest is charged on this at the rate of one or two per cent per month. Such loans are called *khawai*. There has been no increase since the period before the famines in the interest on grain loans, but for cash the rate of interest is said to have risen from 12 to 18 or 24 per cent. The practice of taking bonds for all debts is also said to be becoming customary, bonds being now taken even for loans of seed grain. The restriction of credit is a natural result of the great indebtedness

of the agricultural classes, and of the enormous amount of debt which has been wiped off without payment. This restriction may be and no doubt is inconvenient to them, but whether it is really to their disadvantage is very much open to question.

Moneylenders.

143. The most important moneylending firm in the District is that of Raghunāth Dās Hamīrmal Oswāl Baniās of Ajmer. Their representative in Damoh is Sukhdeo Munīm, who is an Honorary Magistrate and a leading citizen of Damoh. This firm took no part in the recent conciliation proceedings.[1] It is known locally as the 'Barī Dūkān.' Seth Dālchand Parwār Baniā of Damoh, at present (1905) a minor, has perhaps the largest transactions next to the above firm. Most of his villages lie in the hilly tracts to which the conciliation proceedings were not extended. But he remitted Rs. 18,000. Rājā Gokul Dās does not do much business in Damoh except in his own villages. There are no other very large moneylenders. The Pateria family of Garia who are Jijhotia Brāhmans, had formerly extensive transactions and were distinguished by their liberality in the conciliation proceedings, but their capital is now exhausted. Pyāre Lāl Pallīwāl Brāhman has now fairly extensive transactions. Most of those who remitted large sums in the conciliation proceedings have now ceased lending money.

Indebtedness of the agricultural classes. Proprietors.

144. The people were already somewhat embarrassed at the time of the settlement of 1893-94, the origin of the bulk of the indebtedness being traced by Mr. Fuller to the farming settlements which preceded the 30 years' settlement of 1863-64, when the demand of the revenue was through a mistake assessed and exacted with undue rigour. The succession of bad years which ensued from 1893 to 1901 increased the load of debt to an intolerable extent. In the conciliation proceedings carried out in 1899 the debts of shareholders and tenants in 594 villages were dealt with. These

[1] See para 147.

were found to amount to Rs. 40 lakhs or a sum equal to fourteen times the land revenue of those villages. This result though sufficiently serious was exceeded in Hoshangābād where inquiries made in 1901 showed that the indebtedness of tenants amounted to ten times the rental. No other statistics of indebtedness in Damoh could be obtained, but there can be littie doub' that proprietors and tenants alike are still seriously embarrassed. Very few of the mālguzārs are out of debt. Still fewer advance seed grain to their tenants; and even those who do so have been obliged greatly to restrict their operations since the famines. Many, if not most of the proprietors who remitted large sums in the conciliation proceedings have now ceased to lend money and are themselves involved. The houses of landowners are frequently not even kept in repair, and they eat gram and juār as their ordinary food instead of wheat. They seldom make any show with their clothes and their women are much worse dressed than formerly. They have sold enormous quantities of ornaments. It has been stated that the proprietors now also experience greater difficulty in the realisation of rents and that their authority over the tenants has been weakened.

Tenants.

145. Mr. Fuller wrote as follows of the tenant class in 1893:—'The principal castes of ryots are the Lodhīs and the Kurmīs. The 'Lodhīs are generally the more prosperous of the two. To 'this various causes have contributed. Their lands lie mostly 'in the hill valleys and not in the *havelī* and the cultivation 'of rice as well as of wheat gives them, so to speak, two 'strings to their bow—one or other crop acting as insurance 'against a heavy seasonal disaster. Their holdings are as a 'rule small and easily manageable. And as they commonly 'cultivate in villages owned by their fellow-castemen, they 'do not experience the effects of that antagonism between 'ryot and mālguzār, which leads sometimes to litigation, 'sometimes to rack-renting and sometimes to the complete 'degradation of the tenantry, the mālguzār involving them in

'his debt by loans of grain and money and using his power 'to annex the whole of their produce save such as is required 'for bare livelihood. Instances of oppression of this kind 'are, it may be mentioned, unfortunately very common in the 'District, and particularly where the proprietor is known or 'believed to have influence with the Officers of Government. 'The Kurmīs, on the other hand, cultivate mainly in the *havelī*, 'where they hold large farms and pay rents which run to much 'higher amounts than are commonly met with among Lodhīs. 'Of the tenantry in the Narsinghgarh and Damoh groups, 'which are typical of the *havelī* tract, the Settlement Officer 'wrote that they were not as a rule well-to-do. They practi-'cally depend for seed, cattle and food on advances from money-'lenders, and it is rare to find more than two or three men in 'a village who sow their own seed. A great many of them 'are in debt; but too much importance must not be attached to 'this as they often take advances from their *sāhukārs* merely to 'keep up the connection so that if they are in need they may 'have a banker ready at hand. The most fruitful causes of debt 'are extravagant expenditure on marriages and the possession 'of over large holdings. Mr. Wilson wrote strongly on the 'first point and cited an instance which came to his notice in 'which a ryot, who was Rs. 1,000 in debt, admitted having cele-'brated no less than fifteen marriages in his family during the 'preceding 25 years which had cost him at least Rs. 4,000. 'On the second point, Mr. Wilson stated that he was fairly 'confident that the tenants in the *havelī* had as a rule far too 'large holdings, and that in consequence they were unable to 'cultivate them properly except in a year of exceptionally 'favourable rainfall. In a bad year many of the large holdings 'were in great part fallow or only half cultivated. As the ten-'ant had to pay rent for the whole of this land, and also invari-'ably borrowed as much seed as was necessary to sow it all, 'for which he had to pay 25 per cent interest, it was obvious 'that if the land remained fallow or only partly cultivated he 'incurred a heavy loss. And he noticed the tenacity with

'which tenants with absolute occupancy or occupancy rights 'refused to surrender even a portion of their holdings long 'after the means of cultivation and credit were exhausted; a 'course which naturally ended in their being ousted from the 'whole of their land, while by giving up a portion in time 'they might have rehabilitated themselves. It must be remem-'bered that at the time of the Settlement Officer's inquiries the 'ryots of the *havelī* had suffered from a succession of very 'poor spring harvests. This was mentioned by the Settle-'ment Officer as a special contributory cause of indebtedness, 'and he added that there could be no doubt that much of the 'embarrassment he met with was merely temporary and 'would be cleared off by two or three harvests. It may be 'added that there is very little in the appearance of the ryots 'which speaks of impoverishment They are well fed and 'can mostly afford warm quilted coats for the cold weather. 'Their houses are substantial and their preposterous expen-'diture on marriages would be impossible had they not good 'credit. These remarks do not, however, apply to the large 'class of Gond ryots who are generally in very poor circum-'stances. Much of the land in their cultivation is of extremely 'low productiveness, and their farming would often be insuffi-'cient to support them unless supplemented by labour at 'harvest-time, the collection of mahuā flowers and other ways. 'They are as a rule insufficiently supplied with cattle, and 'much of their ploughing is effected with bullocks borrowed 'from lowland villages on the *bārhi* system under which a 'part of the produce is rendered for hire.'

Increase of debt during 1891—1901.

146. The decade 1891—1901 was as disastrous for the tenantry as for the proprietors. Under the stress of circumstances even land held in superior right had to be given up. The number of absolute occupancy holdings fell during this period from 15,336 to 15,120, and their total area from 133,000 to 119,000 acres. The number of occupancy holdings decreased from 20,000 to 18,700 and their area from

167,000 to 137,000 acres. There was a substantial decline in the number of plough-cattle from 87,000 to 73,000. The cropped area decreased by nearly 20 per cent. Gram and juār took the place of wheat as food grains, and instances have been found in the *havelī* of children who have never tasted wheaten *chapātis*. The old prejudice against eating foreign sugar has had to disappear, and Mirzāpur sugar has been replaced in the market by the cheaper article imported from the Mauritius. Another important effect of the famines is that tenants as a class work more with the help of their families and employ fewer farm-servants.

Debt conciliation proceedings.

147. In 1899 the striking deterioration in agriculture and the rate at which holdings were being surrendered in consequence of the burden of debt, excited the apprehension of Mr. Fuller, the Commissioner of Jubbulpore, and Mr. Blakesley, the Deputy Commissioner, and a scheme for the voluntary conciliation and remission of debts was arranged and carried through by Mr. Blakesley, the officer in direct charge of the proceedings being Mr. Anant Lāl, Extra Assistant Commissioner. Damoh was the first District in which this measure was attempted, and on its successful issue the example was followed in several other Districts. The proceedings were conducted by the appointment of native gentlemen of good position and character to form a conciliation board; the debtors and creditors came before this, and when the whole of the debtor's liabilities and also his resources were ascertained, a decision was arrived at as to the amount which he could pay in instalments spread over a series of years. This amount was secured by an agreement and the remainder of his debt wiped out. After some hesitation practically all the important moneylenders in the District joined in the proceedings with two or three exceptions. Among the inducements by which they were actuated were the hope of the remission of arrears of land revenue and Government loans; the hope of favourable treatment at the approaching

summary re-settlement; and the force of example and public opinion. When the proceedings were once started, they carried public opinion with them and it became an invidious distinction to be left out of them. But the inducement of religious feeling also operated and was frequently appealed to by the conciliators. 'In many cases the creditor was 'full of religious fervour, and some had already released 'their debts at their houses, after the ceremony of present-'ation of a betel-nut, previous to their release before the '*panch*. In about a dozen cases the creditor struck off his 'whole debt due from the debtor, accepting in satisfaction 'a cow or a cow calf. In about a dozen cases where the debtor 'happened to be a Brāhman by caste, the creditor gave up 'his claims on the condition of the debtor's bringing a pot 'of water from the Nerbudda and therewith bathing the 'god at Bāndakpur, or of worshipping Mahādeo for a certain 'number of years on behalf of the creditor.'[1] The results obtained from the proceedings were that nearly 15,000 tenants and shareholders had their debts arranged. The total amount of debt dealt with was Rs. 40 lakhs, out of which 28 lakhs were wiped off, and for the payment of the remainder various terms of instalments were arranged. The great majority of the persons relieved were tenants. Hopes were entertained of extending the benefits of the conciliation to the petty proprietors (*pattīdārs*), but the fact that proprietors possessed a transferable interest in land rendered creditors reluctant to consent to interference. It was considered also that the general adjustment and statement of accounts advantageously affected the class of tenants known as *gallias*; these are men who are entirely in the hands of their creditors and virtually their serfs. Their landlords, who belong chiefly to the Mārwāri class, supply them with seed-grain and the necessaries of life and in return take the whole of their produce. No accounts or only nominal accounts are kept, no

[1] Letter No. 7127, dated 7th September 1899, from the Commissioner, Jubbulpore, to the Secretary to the Chief Commissioner.

receipts are given and the tenant loses all interest in the produce of his labour, which goes entirely to his landlord. During the proceedings many of these men obtained for the first time a knowledge of their financial position and a chance of establishing themselves in economic independence.

PRICES.

Course of prices. Wheat.

148. During the old 20 years' settlement from 1835 to 1854 grain was extraordinarily cheap, the average price of wheat during the five years ending 1853 being 86 lbs. to the rupee. Rice was 46 lbs. and gram 132 lbs. In 1850 wheat was 110 lbs. The year 1854 is still remembered as that of the Great Blight, when the wheat crop was almost wholly destroyed by rust. Severe distress ensued, and in the course of the succeeding three years, prices rose to a pitch which was very high for those days, wheat selling at one time at less than 40 lbs. to the rupee. In 1857 a fall occurred which still, however, left prices higher than in most other places. The average price of wheat during 1854—58 was 56 lbs and of rice 42 lbs. During the next five years both grains were a little cheaper, wheat being 62 lbs. and rice 38 lbs. These were the rates immediately preceding the settlement of 1863. But at this settlement little regard was paid to prices, and moreover the revenue was not enhanced but was considerably reduced from that of the 20 years' settlement, made at a time when rates were, as has been seen, extraordinarily low. After 1862 there was a sudden rise consequent on the American War, and in the five years ending 1868 grain was almost as dear as in 1892. Wheat was 36 lbs. and rice 27 lbs. to the rupee. After this prices gradually fell until 1886 when the development of the export trade again brought about a rise which continued until after 1901. The prices assumed as averages for the period preceding the settlement of 1888-89 were wheat 48 lbs. and rice 27 lbs. These figures exceeded those of the

quinquennial period before the 30 years' settlement, by 26 per cent in the case of wheat and 40 per cent in that of rice. The price of linseed rose much more largely, the Settlement Officer taking it as 28 lbs. a rupee, which was an increase of 121 per cent on the rate of the 30 years' settlement. Taking the rates arrived at by the Settlement Officer and combining the percentage rises in the price of the three staples in the approximate proportion of their production in the District, a general rise of 34 per cent is obtained. This is a smaller rise than is evidenced by popular opinion. In the first place the rates of 1859—63 had been abnormally enhanced by a succession of bad seasons. And secondly the rates given at this period did not accurately represent the range of prices in the District generally. They merely referred to the Damoh bazar, and as at that time there was little or no external trade, and the town merely imported for its own consumption, the bazar rates were liable to inflation from purely local causes, and might diverge very greatly indeed from the rates in force in neighbouring villages. Taking one thing with another it may be safely assumed that during the 25 years from 1863 to 1888 prices rose by at the very least 50 per cent. Immediately after 1888 the prices of grain rose largely in consequence of the development of the export trade. The average rate of wheat for the years 1889—93 was 34 lbs. and of rice 25 lbs., an increase of 41 per cent in the case of wheat and 8 per cent in that of rice on the settlement rates. After 1893 the failures of crops began to force up prices and wheat rose to 23 lbs. in 1895, 19 lbs. in 1896, and 15 lbs. in 1897. It fell again to 24 lbs. in 1899 and rose to 18 lbs. in 1900. During the last three years it has gradually declined and in 1903 was 31 lbs to the rupee as against 48 lbs. at settlement, an increase of 55 per cent.

Other grains.

149. Rice has always been much dearer than wheat, the difference being most marked in the early periods, before the opening

of the railway. The quantity of rice grown in the District is probably insufficient to meet the local demand for consumption, and in the absence of facilities for import rice acquired a fictitious value. During 1849—53 the price of rice was almost double that of wheat, and from that time up till 1893 it was 44 per cent more expensive on the average. After 1893 during the famine years, the prices of the two grains became nearly equal. In 1901 and 1902 wheat was 4 lbs. in the rupee cheaper, while in 1903 the difference again increased wheat being 31 lbs. and rice 20 lbs. Gram is also substantially cheaper than wheat, presumably owing to the smaller expense involved in its cultivation, and it may be also because it is less esteemed as a food. Before the bad years the quantity of gram which could be purchased for a rupee was generally 10 to 20 lbs. larger than that of wheat. In 1897 and 1900 the price of gram was 18½ and 22 lbs. respectively or about 4 lbs. cheaper than wheat in each case. Since 1900 the difference has again risen to 10 or 12 lbs. Kodon or kutkī is always somewhat cheaper than gram, but the difference varies greatly. In a good year it may be 10 or 20 lbs. cheaper, while during the famines the prices of the two grains were nearly equal. The price of juār approximates to that of gram, being considerably cheaper when the juār harvest is a good one, and in other years very nearly the same. The price of linseed was 23 lbs. in 1891 as against 28 lbs. at last settlement. It has never since fallen to the same level and has ranged between 13 and 22 lbs. The cultivation of this oilseed was very popular in the early nineties, but since then it has declined, notwithstanding that the selling price has increased. Til, however, is now also a very valuable crop and is apparently a safer agricultural investment than linseed.

Statistics of prices.

150. The statement on the next page shows the prices of the four food-grains in each quinquennium between 1849 and 1903.

Period.	Pounds per rupee.			
	Wheat.	Rice.	Gram.	Juār.
1849—1853 ...	86	46	132	148
1854—1858 ...	56	42	74	80
1859—1863 ...	62	38	74	93
1864—1868 ...	36	27	46	46
1869—1873 ..	42	31	50	42
1874—1878 ...	45	32	57½	52
1879—1883 ...	50	28	70	84
1884—1888 ..	48	27	60	70
1889—1893 ...	34	25	41	42
1894—1898 ...	21	20	30	34
1899—1902 (four years). ...	23	20	31	32½

Prices of miscellaneous articles.

151. The price of salt remained at 18 lbs. to the rupee with very slight fluctuations from 1891 to 1902, and fell to 20½ lbs. in 1903 and 24 lbs. in 1904 as a result of the reduction of the duty in 1903. The further reduction of the duty in 1905 brought it down to 27½ lbs. in that year. *Gur* or unrefined sugar varies from 18 to 22 lbs. per rupee, the rates being different at different seasons of the year. The *gur* grown locally is from 2 to 4 lbs. more expensive than that imported and very little is now produced. Mirzāpur sugar is from 7 to 8 lbs. a rupee and Mauritius sugar from

8 to 9 lbs. Milk is sold at 32 lbs. to the rupee in Damoh and pure milk at 26 lbs. Milk is not generally sold in villages. The Gaolīs water the milk which they sell, except that supplied to the confectioners. Milk is cheapest in the rains when it falls to 40 lbs. a rupee and most expensive in the hot weather, especially when a number of marriages are in progress. The rate for *ghī* or melted butter was 3 lbs. to the rupee in Damoh in 1903 and 1904 and 2⅔ lbs. in 1905. It has increased in price during the last decade. Grass is sold at the rate of 1,500 *pūlās* or bundles to the rupee in the winter and 600 in the hot weather. A cartload of firewood containing from 5 to 8 maunds or 400 to 640 lbs. costs from 12 annas to Rs. 1-4. Firewood is only sold regularly in Damoh. Tenants bring firewood from the forests in their own carts, the expenditure on one cartload being the license-fee of 2 annas in Government forest and 4 annas for labour, or 6 annas in all. A family of five persons will obtain six or seven cartloads of firewood in the year. One cartload would last about a month if used by itself and is eked out by cow-dung cakes and pickings from mālguzāri forest. A headload of firewood weighs from 40 to 60 lbs. and costs from 1½ to 3 annas in Damoh.

WAGES.

Statistics of wages.

152. In 1893 the wages of an able-bodied agricultural labourer were shown at Rs. 4-12 a month and those of skilled artisans or masons, carpenters and blacksmiths at Rs. 11-10. In 1902 a labourer received Rs. 5 a month and in 1903 Rs 4, and the wages of artisans were shown at Rs. 12 to Rs. 15. These rates, however, are probably those ruling in Damoh, and the customary wages for agricultural labour in the interior are lower, whether calculated in cash or grain.

Farm-servants.

153. Farm-servants employed for the whole year are called *barsia* or *harwaha*. A cultivator will keep about half as many farm-servants as he has ploughs in continuous employment, and for the remaining work will employ labourers as required.

A tenant with two pairs of plough-cattle thus has only one permanent farm-servant as a rule. Farm-servants are usually engaged on a monthly wage of Rs. 3 to Rs. 3-8 if paid in cash and of 6 *seis* or 144 lbs. if paid in grain. In some portions of the District 5 *seis* or 120 lbs. is the rate and in his case a small plot of land of about $\frac{2}{5}$ths of an acre in the tenant's holding is frequently sown for the farm-servant, from which he will obtain about another 200 lbs. after deducting the seed-grain. Besides this he receives one pair of shoes annually or two if required, and a blanket or Re. 1 instead of it. Wages in kind are paid half in the autumn and half in the spring grains. During harvest for about a month, the farm-servant also receives a sheaf of corn every day containing $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 lbs. of grain, and when harvest is finished a *bojhā* or headload which is equivalent to 24 lbs. At the end of sowing the farm-servant also gets a present called *barhonā* of 6 lbs. of grain; and during four months of the rains he receives free food once a month on 'Amāwas' or the 15th day of the month, when the cattle are not yoked and no work is done. The total value of these perquisites is about 158 lbs. and the total grain wages of a farm-servant are thus about 1,728 lbs., or taking grain at 40 lbs. to the rupee about Rs. 43. The grain wages are thus substantially higher than the cash wages, and the introduction of cash payments is probably to be attributed to the high prices of grain ruling during the nineties, and represent a decrease in wages. The grain wages of farm-servants have not varied within living memory. But during the famines they were paid in the inferior grains, juār, tiurā, kodon and gram being substituted for wheat. The head farm-servant of a mālguzār is called *chirohī* and gets one *sei* or 24 lbs. of grain more than the others.

Graziers.

154. The cattle-herd is called *baredī*. Landowners and large tenants have their private herdsmen, and there is also one herdsman for the village in small villages and two or three in large ones. A herdsman gets 2 to 4 *seis* or 48 to 96 lbs. of grain a month

according as he is a boy or a man. A private herdsman also gets a pair of shoes and a blanket and a little grain at seed-time and harvest, but not nearly so much as a farm-servant, and not as a regular due but merely as a present. When a she-buffalo is born he gets a cloth or some grain. A village herdsman gets 1 anna for a cow and 2 annas for a she-buffalo per month and sometimes only half this. Bullocks are paid for at the same rate as cows. For the first calf of a cow he receives 4 annas and for that of a buffalo 8 annas. He receives no payment for grazing cows till they get their first calves. He gets the first day's milk after a calf is born, which is called *telī*. This milk is offered to one of the village gods. The milk of a cow for the first eight days and of a buffalo for the first four days is distributed to friends; this is because this milk cannot be made into ghī owing to its thickness and its liability to curd. When he takes an animal into the herd for the first time, the herdsman is given two pice for his trouble in getting it accustomed to the others. Another agricultural servant is the *gobarwāri*. She is usually a woman and her duty is to remove cow-dung from the stalls and place it on the manure-heap outside the village. This she does for the four rainy months, and during the rest of the year she makes cow-dung cakes. She receives one, two or three *seis* or from 24 to 72 lbs. of grain a month according to the number of cattle. Among the cultivating castes the women themselves, even the wives of the mālguzārs, collect the manure.

Casual labourers.

155. A casual labourer whether agricultural or not is called *banihār*. Special names for agricultural labourers are *bokā* for a sower, *nidaiyā* for a weeder, and *nunaiyā* for a reaper. Agricultural labour is usually paid for in grain, and cash wages are given only in Damoh, Hattā and a few other large villages. The rates of cash wages are 6 to 7 pice for a woman and 8 to 10 pice for a man. For sowing and weeding the rates for a man are 2 to 4 *chauthias* or $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 5 lbs.

of grain a day. Sowing is not very laborious, but the work has to be got through at high pressure in order to have as much land as possible sown at the most favourable season. If there is moonlight the labourers and cattle work all day and night in relays, the owner going and sitting in the field to watch them. Weeding is usually paid for by daily wages either of cash or grain; the cash rates are 6 pice for a woman and 2 annas for a man. For these wages the weeders work all day with an interval of two hours for their midday meal. All the autumn crops are weeded, rice, cotton and juār two or three times and other crops once. Reaping is usually paid for by contract at the rate of one sheaf for every 16 to 30 sheaves reaped according as the crop is sown sparsely or thickly. One sheaf in twenty is an ordinary rate for wheat. Gram is not tied up but is made into little heaps or haycocks called *karpā*. The rate of payment is the same as for wheat. Juār and rice are paid for at the rate of 4 *chauthias* or 6 annas a day. Farm-servants and labourers are generally Chamārs in the open country and Gonds in the hills, but they belong also to all the cultivating castes including Brāhmans. Judged by any economic standard these people are miserably poor. They are ill-clothed and live in great squalor. Any surplus they may earn at certain seasons of the year is generally spent on drink, and at times they are certainly pinched for food. A farm-servant in his own village has a house of his own, tiled in the *havelī* and thatched in the hills, but if he comes from another village he lives in his employer's house. If he has been some time in the village he usually has a small garden of from a twentieth to a fifth of an acre, in which he sows maize or vegetables, and from which he gets enough to feed two persons for 15 days or a month. If this is outside the village site it is usually assessed to 1 or 2 annas of rent, and is then a holding, but if inside the village no rent is assessed. His house consists of one room and a veranda and is worth Rs. 10 or Rs. 12. His clothes consist of a strip of cloth for the head, a

waistcoat and a pair of loin-cloths. When he can afford a new loin-cloth, the old one becomes his head-covering. In the cold weather he may have a quilted waistcoat. His wife will have one shoulder-cloth and one skirt in the year.

Periods of slack employment.

156. The two periods of two months in January and February and from the middle of April to the middle of June are the slackest times of the year for labourers. Before the rains have broken the houses are mended and thatched and when they break cultivating work begins. During the cold weather labourers earn a few pice by bringing in headloads of grass and firewood for sale. In the hot weather they gather the mahuā which is plentiful in the hills but not in the *havelī* or Sonār valley. Many of the Gond tenants are almost in the position of labourers and their land is so poor that its cultivation would be insufficient to support them unless supplemented in various ways. These tenants and labourers flock in crowds at the time of the spring harvest to the wheat fields of the Damoh *havelī* on one side and of the Jubbulpore District on the other, and their harvesting earnings are a most essential item in their means of subsistence.

Village servants.

157. Another important class to whom customary wages are paid are the village artisans or servants. Setting aside the patwāri or accountant and kotwār or watchman, who now receive cash stipends and are practically in the employment of Government, the principal village servants are the Lohār or blacksmith, the Barhai or carpenter, the Nai or barber, the Dhīmar or water-bearer, the Dhobī or washerman, and the Purohit and Pandā or village priests. The Kumhār or potter and Basor or basket-maker do not usually receive customary dues, but sell their wares, while the Chamār is the general village drudge.

Carpenter and blacksmith.

158. The Lohār and Barhai are to be found in most villages and they make and mend the iron and wooden implements of agriculture, the materials being supplied to them. For making carts they must be separately paid. For this each receives 24 lbs. per plough of two bullocks per year. This is divided as follows :—In Asārh they receive what is called Asārhi, or a present of 4 lbs. of grain ; at sowing-time the *pasā* which is 12 lbs. for a plough of four bullocks or 6 lbs. for two ; at harvest a sheaf of 2 lbs ; and after the crop is threshed a *bojhā* of 24 lbs. for a plough of 4 bullocks or 12 lbs. for two. The Barhai and Lohār are of equal standing in Damoh, and rank below Lodhīs and Kurmīs from whom they will take food cooked with water.

Barber and waterman.

159. The Nai and Dhīmar are only found in large villages. Sometimes they hold a plot of land rent-free in lieu of service. The Nai gets the same remuneration as the Barhai and Lohār. He shaves the males of the family, usually once a fortnight. The Nai can shave Chamārs in Damoh, but he sometimes keeps a separate razor and sometimes washes it after use. He cannot shave Basors. His implements are the *chhurā* or razor and *badhia* or strop. He uses hot water if his clients supply it, otherwise cold. The Nai also applies massage to the legs of his clients when they are tired and unwell. The barber's wife washes the hair of the women of the family three or four times a month among the higher castes. The Dhīmar fills the water-pots in the *ghinochī* or tripod-stand. He must not use a leather *mussack* but must bring the water in earthen or brass pots. The Dhīmar is only employed by land-owners and well-to-do tenants, the women of the household themselves bringing water among other classes. For bringing water the Dhīmar receives a monthly wage which varies with the amount of work to be done. He is also employed to come and clean the cooking and eating vessels in the morning and for this he gets his first meal, and a present

of Rs. 1 or 2 a year. If employed as a household servant he receives Rs. 4 a month. He also takes the food which is left in the cooking-pot as this is not considered as polluted, food only becoming polluted when the hand touches it on the dish after having touched the mouth.

Washerman.

160. The Dhobī receives the same remuneration as the Lohār and Barhai. He washes the clothes of the tenants once or twice a month, and at a death or birth he washes all the clothes and bedding of the family. When he brings the clothes he comes and stands in the veranda, and a woman of the family takes the clothes from him on a stool, or she holds out her hands and he throws the clothes on to them, so that they should not both touch the clothes together. Formerly a Brāhman never had his clothes washed by the Dhobī; he had two *dhotīs* which he washed himself and one good cloth; this was washed once a month by the Dhobī, and afterwards again washed in the Brāhman's house. But now instead of doing this the Brāhman takes a piece of gold and puts it in water and then sprinkles the water over the clothes. This is considered to be sufficient to purify them.

Kumhār or potter.

161. The Kumhār is not a regular village servant but sells his pots. For weddings he supplies the vessels required on contract for two or three rupees. Vessels for a wedding must be purchased from the Kumhār from whom the ordinary household vessels are obtained, and must not be bought in the bazar. Brāhmans have a special set of vessels made for them. The Bardia Kumhārs or those who use bullocks as pack-animals supply vessels for the higher castes; and the Sungaria or pig-keeping Kumhārs for the lowest castes. The Gadherā Kumhārs, who use donkeys as pack-animals, do not usually make household vessels but bricks and tiles.

Basket-maker.

162. The Basor makes the bamboo baskets required for a variety of household and agricultural purposes. These he sells in

the ordinary manner. He enters into the village economy, however, as his wife does the work of midwife and he plays the musical instruments at weddings and other festivals. The players receive from 1 to 4 annas each and their food for the whole time they are engaged. The Basorin receives 4 to 8 annas for a girl and 8 annas to a rupee for a boy for acting as midwife. In the cold weather the Basor makes a hole in the ground and kindles a fire of cow-dung cakes. The tenants come and sit round this for two or three hours after taking their food, and smoke and talk. The tenant who employs the Basor to make the fire gives him a *bojhā* or 24 lbs. of grain at harvest. The Basor will eat food from the Chamār but not from the Dhobī. But as the Dhobī's clothes are worn he is considered superior to the Basor and Chamār.

Chamār or tanner.

163. The Chamār acts as a village servant in the following manner. Each Chamār in the village is appointed to a tenant. Every day that he is called to work for his master he receives 3 lbs. of grain. He assists at sowing-time and in threshing and cleaning the grain and receives the same wages. At harvest-time he gets double the wage of an ordinary reaper. After the close of the rains he brings earth for plastering the house, and he does any other miscellaneous work. He prepares the threshing-floor and receives the grain mixed with earth which is left on it after the threshed crop is removed. He prepares the little huts of grass in which the tenant and farm-servants stay to watch the crops. He supplies shoes free to the tenant and his family. All the work he has done is then calculated and at harvest-time he receives payment for it in grain.

Total payments by tenants.

164. The following is a rough estimate of the amounts expended by a tenant on payments for labour and to the village servants. The tenant is supposed to have a

holding of 24 acres, consisting of 10 acres of kharīf crops; 9 acres of rabi crops, and 5 acres of fallow, this distribution being taken in the same proportions as that of the occupied area of the District. Similarly if the 19 acres under crop be divided up among the principal crops of the District the kharīf area will consist of 3 acres of rice, 4 acres of juār and 3 acres of kodon, and the rabī area of 6 acres of wheat, 2 acres of gram and 1 acre of linseed. Such a tenant would have 4 bullocks, and might be expected to employ a farm-servant. And for two months during the sowing seasons he will employ a boy to graze his plough cattle in the intervals of cultivation, making them over to the village grazier for the rest of the year. In the statement given below the tenant's own labour is excluded from computation :—

Particulars of tenants' payments.	Payment in kind	Payment in cash.
	lbs.	Rs.
Purohit (Village priest) ...	5	...
Barhai (Carpenter)	48	...
Lohār (Blacksmith) ...	48	...
Naī (Barber)	48	...
Dhobī (Washerman) ...	48	...
One farm-servant for a whole year @ Rs. 3 p.m.	...	36
A pair of shoes and a blanket for him ...	...	2
His perquisites in grain	158	...

Particulars of tenants' payments.	Payment in kind.	Payment in cash.
	lbs.	Rs.
One Baredī or grazier @ a. 1-0 per bullock per month, for 4 bullocks for 10 months	...	2-8-0
One boy for 2 months of kharīf and rabi sowings @ 16 lbs. per month to graze the plough cattle	32	...
1st weeding of kharīf land @ 6 coolies for one day per acre=60 coolies @ 3 lbs. per cooly	180	...
2nd weeding Do.	180	...
Rakhwāli (watching) of kharīf crops for one month @ 4 lbs. per day ...	120	...
Reaping of rabī crops at 5 per cent. of the gross produce of 9 acres of rabī land=234 lbs. or Rs. 7-9-1 ...	234	...
Reaping of kharīf crops of 10 acres @ 3 coolies per acre per day=30 @ as. 0-1-6 per cooly	...	2-13-0
		43-5-0
Feed of bullocks (oil-cake) at one seer per bullock for 4 bullocks for 2 months @ 25 seers of oil-cake per rupee	...	9-10-0
Abstract. Total cash payments .. Rs. 43-5-0 Total grain payments excluding charges for rabī reaping, 867 lbs @*43 lbs. per rupee ... ... Rs. 20-2-7 Reaping charges of rabī 234 lbs „ 7-9-1 Feed of cattle ... ... „ 9-10-0 Total ... 80-10-8	1,101	

* This rate is the average price of juâr and wheat as payments are made half in kharīf and half in rabi.

The tenant's payments for labour including feed of cattle will thus amount to about Rs. 80. The value of the autumn crops calculated according to the standard outturn and the price rates for 1903 comes to Rs. 123 and that of the spring crops to Rs. 151, the total value of the produce being thus Rs. 274. The cost of labour including remuneration of village servants and feed of cattle is 30 per cent of the produce. The rent may be taken at nearly Rs 27 at the District rent rate of Rs. 1-1-10 per occupied acre, or rather under a tenth of the produce. The value of seed-grain including interest at 50 per cent on rice and 25 per cent on the spring grains is Rs. 47, or about a sixth of the produce. The total expenses of cultivation thus amount to Rs. 154, or 56 per cent of the produce of the holding. This estimate of expenses is probably rather over the mark, as with only 19 acres actually under crop the tenant might only keep one pair of bullocks, and if he had children might dispense with a farm-servant. Very little allowance has been made either for the labour of his wife.

MANUFACTURES.

Weaving and dyeing.

165. The cotton-weaving industry is scantily represented in Damoh. Bānsa Kalān is the largest centre with about 150 houses of weavers, and there are a number also at Hattā, Raneh, Hindoria, Mariādoh, Paterā, Sītānagar and Damoh. Mill-spun thread is now almost solely used for cloth which is to be worn. Only *newār*-tape, *dorias* or cart covers, and mats and carpets are made from home-spun thread. The weavers are generally Korīs and weave the coarsest cloth. There are a very few Koshtīs who use the finer counts of thread. The Koshtīs weave with coloured thread, and the coarse cloth of the Korīs is dyed after being produced. The dyers are as little prosperous as the weavers. Indigo and *al* or Indian madder are still used to a slight extent, but they have generally been supplanted by imported agents. *Al* was formerly

cultivated in Hattā and other villages. Aniline dyes were very little employed before the construction of the railway, but in the short period which has elapsed since they have come into general use. The Chhīpas or cotton-printers use red ochre, myrabolans and turmeric. Bānsa is the principal dyeing centre, and its printed cloths are well known locally. Damoh, Hindoria, Aslāna, Hattā, Tarkhedā, Paterā and Raneh also have a number of dyers. Practically no silk is woven in the District. Woollen blankets are made by the shepherd Gadarias, who keep goats and sheep. A certain amount of hemp is woven for sacking.

Metals.

166. There are a few houses of Sonārs or gold and silver-workers in Damoh, Patharia and Hattā, and one or two in other large villages. The ornaments made are generally heavy and possess no distinction of workmanship. The Audhiā Sonārs make ornaments of bell-metal, which are very largely worn. Nickel and gilt ornaments and rings of zinc, brass and copper are imported ready made. Workers in brass, copper and bell-metal are found in Damoh, Hindoria, Pathariā, Hattā and Paterā. Copper is imported for the local manufacture of brass and bell-metal, but copper vessels are not usually made, the few which are used being imported from Cawnpore. Muhammadans here generally use brass vessels and Hindus very seldom use copper utensils at all because they have to be tinned, and tinned vessels are made impure if used by others. Tin is also considered an inferior metal by Hindus, though copper itself is very sacred. Brass is principally imported in sheets and also made locally to a small extent from zinc and copper. Brass is sold at 13 or 14 annas a seer, and vessels are sold by weight at from 14 annas to Rs. 1-4-0. Besides eating and drinking vessels, chains, rings, *chunaitis* (boxes for keeping lime), tooth-picks, toys, and images are made. Bell-metal is manufactured locally. For vessels 27 *tolās* (of $\frac{2}{5}$ths of an ounce) of tin are mixed with a *seer* (2 lbs.) of copper and for ornaments 38 to 50 tolās of

zinc with a seer of copper. Ornaments are cheaper than vessels in proportion to their weight because they contain less copper. All kinds of eating and drinking vessels are made in Hattā, where the workmen have considerable skill and impart a peculiar polish to the metal. Bells are also made and sent to Saugor. The ornaments usually made are those worn on the ankles and toes. Vessels of bell-metal are brittle and break when dropped. Acids can be kept in them, whereas they produce verdigris in brass and copper. Bell-metal vessels cannot be lent to others as they cannot be purified by subsequently burning them as brass and copper vessels are purified. They can, however, be lent for holding water or milk. Vessels of bell-metal are sold by weight at Rs. 1-8-0 to Rs. 2 a seer (2 lbs.), large ornaments at Rs. 1-4-0 a seer, and small ones by the piece at rates equivalent to Rs. 4 or Rs. 5 a seer. English iron is mainly used, though blocks of country iron are imported from Chhatarpur State. In Jaberā there are a number of Lohārs who make knives, hatchets, and *sarotās* or nut cutters.

Miscellaneous.

167. The Kunderās make wooden toys, pipes and bedsteads and lacquer them. The District contains a considerable number of bamboo-workers, who make all kinds of baskets and fans. Mats and brooms of palm leaves are also made and *kūchis* or brushes of *mūnj* grass (*Saccharum ciliare*) by the Kuchbandhias The pottery of Damoh has some reputation. The town contains about 50 houses of Kumhārs, who, besides the ordinary earthen vessels, make lamps, *surāhis* or amphoras and pipe-bowls. The clay found at Damoh is smooth and malleable. Pipe-bowls are made of a terra-cotta colour with clay brought from Betūl, and a light silver appearance is given by the use of mica. They are ornamented with open-work patterns. These are exported to Jubbulpore. The *potla* is a vessel peculiar to Damoh. It is round and flat-bellied with a narrow neck. Two holes are made in the neck, through which a rope is passed, and the vessel can thus

be slung over the shoulders. Agriculturists and Banjārās use it to carry water about with them. At Hattā are four or five houses of Mochīs who make clay toys and images. Glass bangles are made by Kacherās at Damoh, Hindoria, Paterā, Deodongrā and Khanderī. The glass is imported from Cawnpore. Bangles of transparent glass imported from Europe are now preferred to those made locally. Lac bangles are made by Lakherās in Damoh, Patharia and other places from a mixture of lac and earth. They are very brittle and as a rule are worn only during the month of Shrāwan and when a newly-married bride goes to her husband's house. Cubes of lac are also made for children to play with during Shrāwan, and necklaces and other ornaments, which are worn by small children and women who cannot afford anything better. The leather-working industry is a strong one in Damoh, about 9,000 persons being supported by it. The leather-workers or Chamārs are distributed all over the District. They make the local or Bundelkhandī shoes which are universally worn, sewing them with strips of leather and not with thread. They also make the leather thongs and other articles needed for agriculture, and ornamental shoes for marriages, crusted over with scarlet and tinsel thread. Country paper is made at Panchamnagar. In 1901 the number of persons supported by the industry was 48. The paper is made out of hemp, and the sales amount to about Rs. 1,000 a year. The paper is used for banker's account-books. The best quality is called *tānsen* and is sold at 12 annas a quire of 24 sheets larger than double foolscap. The paper makers are Barais.

Weights and measures.

168. The most common measure is the *chauthia* which may be small or large. The following is the scale of measurements for the small *chauthia* :—

One small *chauthia* = 60 tolās.

One *sei* = 16 *chauthias* or 12 seers (of 2 lbs.)

One *māni* = 20 *seīs*, 6 maunds or 480 lbs.

The *chauthia* is further subdivided into 4 *paholīs* of 15 tolās each, and another measure is the *pailā* of 8 small *chauthias* or 6 seers. The large *chauthia* is used in the Damoh, Hattā, and Tejgarh Revenue Inspectors' circles. Its scale is as follows:—

One large *chauthia* = 100 tolās.
One *kuro* = 4 large *chauthias* or 5 seers (of 2 lbs).
One *māni* = 48 *kuros* or 6 maunds.
One *khandī* = 20 *kuros* or 100 seers.

The *māni* is thus the same in both kinds of measurement. But in some of the hilly tracts a third *chauthia* is used which is equivalent to 50 tolās. The *seī* then contains 16 *chauthias* or 10 seers and the *māni* 5 maunds. Grain is universally sold by measurement, even in Damoh where the municipality has ordered weights to be used. Standard measures of the large *chauthia* of 100 tolās are issued by the Agricultural Department. In the case of metals and other articles sold by weight there are two kinds of seers and maunds. The *katchā* or Government seer contains 80 tolās and the *pakkā* seer 100 *bādshāhi* or Mughal, and 96 Government tolās. According to the common method of talking of fields by their seed-capacity, a *māni* of wheat land is equivalent to 4 acres. The result of this would be that 120 lbs. of seed would go to an acre, but in fact only 96 lbs. are sown. The difference is due to the fact that the *māni* in this case includes the presents to village servants and others paid at sowing-time. Intelligent agriculturists now talk of the areas of fields in acres and decimals of an acre.

Markets and fairs.

169. The principal weekly markets are those of Niborā in Hattā tahsīl, Nohtā, Damoh, and Hattā. Niborā and Nohtā are the most important markets. A large quantity of rice is brought for sale to Nohtā. Damoh has the only cattle-market in the District, and grain for export is also sold in Damoh. The markets next to these in importance are those of Hindoria, Patharia,

Phuterā, Paterā, Gaisābād, Magron, and Raneh. Two important annual fairs are held at Bāndakpur and Kundalpur.[1] The fair at Kundalpur is a religious gathering of the Parwār Baniās, who are Jains. It was stopped for many years owing to the difficulty of obtaining water. The fair is held in March and lasts for 15 days. The attendance is between 5,000 and 10,000 persons and between 100 and 200 temporary shops are erected for the sale of cloth, jewellery, vessels and provisions. A few cattle are sometimes also brought for sale. The expenditure on supervision and sanitation is about Rs. 500. The Bāndakpur fair is held in January or February at the festival of Basant Panchami and lasts for a week or ten days. The attendance rose to 50,000 in 1891 but in recent years up to 1902 it has not been above 15,000. The number of temporary shops opened has also declined from nearly 800 to 500. Shops are established by traders from Jubbulpore, Saugor and Narsinghpur. The expenditure in connection with the fair is about Rs. 150. Another small gathering is held at Bāndakpur on the day of Shivratri in March, but this has declined in importance and can no longer be called a fair. The only other fair at which any business is done is held at Choprā in the month of Kārtik (October-November). A few temporary shops are brought, but the attendance does not exceed a thousand persons. Religious gatherings are also held at Damoh, Kharerā, Markolā and Satsumā near Hattā.[2]

TRADE.

Trade in former years.

170. At the time of the 30 years' settlement (1863-64) the trade of the District was considerable. Imports were brought from Mirzāpur and the Upper Provinces along the Hattā-Gaisābād road consisting of European and country-made piece-goods, betel, cocoanuts, hardware, tobacco, spices, rum and sugar. The imports in transit through the District were valued at 13

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[1] See also Gazetteer articles on these places.

[2] See also Gazetteer articles on Damoh and Satsumā.

lakhs of rupees, but a great portion of these were sent to Saugor and Bhopāl and merely passed through Damoh. Salt was brought by the Banjārās in large quantities from the Rājputāna salt-lakes through Saugor to supply the markets of Bundelkhand, the value of the salt annually carried through the District being estimated at 3 lakhs of rupees. The exports consisted of wheat, gram, rice, hides, *ghi*, cotton, and coarse cloths. The flourishing state of trade was principally due to the transport of salt from Rājputāna to the Bundelkhand markets, Saugor being a centre for the import of this staple. On the abolition of the salt customs line in 1874, and the introduction of the system of levying duty at the place of manufacture, this trade ceased, and at the same time the traffic with Bundelkhand became much smaller. In the early eighties the export of grain to Jubbulpore for the European market began to develop. Traffic registration effected during the year 1885-86 indicated that the District exported about 6 lakhs of maunds of grain and oilseeds to the railway at Murwāra and Jubbulpore, of which two-thirds were consigned to the former station. The receipts in return amounted to something under 1½ lakhs of maunds, the principal items being salt and sugar. No statistics are available of the traffic which went to Saugor station after the construction of the railway but before its extension to Damoh.

Statistics of rail-borne trade.

171. Since the opening of the Saugor-Katnī line passing through Damoh in 1898, the trade of the District has practically concentrated at Damoh station. In 1901 and 1902 the bulk of the exports from this station amounted to 93 and 95 per cent respectively of the total carried by rail, and the imports to 94 and 91 per cent of the total. Statistics of rail-borne trade in 1903 and 1904 are available for Damoh station only, but the above figures show that they may be considered sufficiently representative of that of the District. Of the remainder of the rail-borne trade in 1901 and 1902 the greater part was through Patharia station, and belonged to the Garhākotā

tract of Saugor. A small quantity of timber is taken by road to Jubbulpore from the south of the District. On the other hand a not inconsiderable proportion of the exports and imports of Damoh station are carried from and to the adjoining Bundelkhand States along the northern roads through Hattā and Narsinghgarh.

Exports.

172. Wheat and oilseeds are the staple articles of export. In recent years the former have declined and the latter increased in importance. The exports of grain and oilseeds have constituted more than 90 per cent of the total in the last two or three years. In 1901 and 1902 the exports of wheat were insignificant, the local stocks not having been replenished after the depletion caused by the famines. In 1903 they amounted to 2½ lakhs of maunds valued at Rs. 6·80 lakhs and in 1904 to nearly 3 lakhs of maunds valued at Rs. 8 lakhs. The exports of other grains were 2·67 lakhs of maunds valued at Rs. 5·70 lakhs in 1903, the figures for 1904 being much smaller. The value of gram exported in this year was Rs. 2·63 lakhs and of juār Rs. 1·85 lakhs: 31,000 maunds of husked rice valued at just over a lakh of rupees were also exported. The total value of grain exported was Rs. 12·50 lakhs in 1903 and Rs. 9·60 lakhs in 1904. Exports of oilseeds were just over 2 lakhs of maunds valued at Rs. 8·21 lakhs in 1903, 82,000 maunds value Rs. 3·47 lakhs being linseed, and 118,000 maunds value Rs. 4·52 lakhs, til. The figures for 1904 showed a falling-off to 166,000 maunds. A little rape and mustard are also exported. Next to grain and oilseeds the most important article of export is *ghī* or melted butter. In 1903 the quantity sent out of the District was 3,700 maunds valued at Rs. 84,000, and in 1904, 5,700 maunds valued at Rs. 1·46 lakhs. These figures, however, are insignificant beside those of Saugor, which District exported 61,000 maunds in 1903. It is probable that owing to the poverty of the soil on the sandstone hills the grazing grasses of Damoh are inferior to those of Saugor. *Ghī* is

principally made from the milk of she-buffaloes who are kept for this purpose, the young males being neglected and allowed to die, or sold cheaply to the wandering caste of Basdewas who drive them to Chhattisgarh and retail them for cultivation. Raw hides form a comparatively minor article of export, the figures for 1904 being 1,600 maunds valued at Rs. 58,000 The export of dried meat is a branch of the same trade, but figures for this are not shown separately in the returns. There is now practically no trade in raw cotton, though at the time of the 30 years' settlement (1863-64), the quantity exported was not inconsiderable. The trade was probably due to the temporary impetus caused by the American War. Among forest products lac is the most important, and the trade in this product after collapsing entirely for a time was revived in 1902. In 1903, 1,600 maunds value Rs. 43,000 were exported, and in 1904, 1,800 maunds value Rs. 61,000. *Kutthā* or catechu is exported to the amount of between 200 and 700 maunds a year. Among minor articles may be mentioned *singhāra* or water-nuts which are grown in a number of tanks and sent to Jubbulpore and the United Provinces. Small quantities of the country paper made at Panchamnagar are sent to other Districts. Betel-vine leaves are exported to the United Provinces. Live parrots are caught in the Batiāgarh forest range and sent to Bombay. Numbers of buffalo calves are sent by road to Chhattisgarh and sheep and goats are slaughtered and exported to Jubbulpore and Saugor for food.

Imports.

173. The principal imports are European and Indian twist and yarn and piece-goods, sugar and salt. The total imports of yarn and piece-goods were 13,000 maunds value Rs. 5·74 lakhs in 1903, and 14,400 maunds value Rs. 6·55 lakhs in 1904. The imports of European yarn were 1,137 and 658 maunds respectively in 1903 and 1904 as against 990 and 1,731 maunds of Indian yarn in the same two years. Except for 1903 when the high price of raw cotton caused a substantial decline in the manufacture of Indian yarn, the imports of the

latter have steadily increased since 1901. The corresponding figures of piece-goods in 1903 and 1904 were 7,500 and 8,500 maunds of European, and 3,000 and 3,500 maunds of Indian respectively. Foreign thread generally comes from Bombay, and Indian from Jubbulpore, Ahmadābād and other places. Indian piece-goods come from the above mills and also from Nāgpur; Indian cloth is less in favour than English and is called *gaontī*. The bulk of the European cloth comes from Bombay and the finer kinds from Calcutta. The imports of salt were 44,000 maunds value Rs. 1·55 lakhs in 1903 and 45,000 maunds value Rs. 1·45 lakhs in 1904. This gives a consumption of just over 12 lbs. per head of population as against the Provincial average of 13 lbs. The salt principally used is sea-salt from the Thāna District of Bombay, called *golandāzi*, because it is sold in round balls. Sāmbhar salt from the Sāmbhar lake, and Kānsia from the Pachbhadrā salt-marshes in Rājputāna are less consumed. A small quantity of salt from Rājputāna is imported by road. 41,000 maunds of sugar value Rs. 2·73 lakhs were imported in 1903 and 42,000 maunds value Rs. 3·48 lakhs in 1904. Of this between 24,000 and 25,000 maunds consisted of *gur* or unrefined sugar. Including the output of the sugarcane grown in the District, the consumption of sugar was 12 lbs. in 1903 and 12½ lbs. in 1904 as against the Provincial average of 13 lbs. Brāhmans, Mārwāri Baniās and some others object to consuming Mauritius sugar, but among other classes it is now commonly used. Mauritius sugar mixed with cane-juice is sometimes sold as coming from Mirzāpur. The imports of kerosine oil were just over 13,000 maunds both in 1903 and 1904 and their value Rs. 46,000 to Rs. 50,000. 3,400 maunds of metals value Rs 65,000 were imported in 1904. These were principally brass and iron both wrought and unwrought. Brass vessels come from Mirzāpur and Cawnpore, partly by road; practically no copper is shown in the returns as imported, and as this metal is used locally in the manufacture of brass and bell-metal, it is

probably brought into the District by road. Paper is obtained from Bombay and country paper from Cawnpore. Gunny-bags for holding grain were imported to the value of Rs. 84,000 in 1903. Tobacco is imported to the extent of from 2,000 to 5,000 maunds a year. The bulk of this comes from Bengal and is called *Bengalā*. American cigarettes at from 2 to 6 pice per packet of 10 are imported for sale in Damoh. Among provisions, under the head of dried fruits and nuts, cocoanuts are largely imported as they are constantly required for use in religious and social ceremonies. Almonds, pistachio nuts, raisins, and grapes which are grown in Afghānistān are obtained from Delhi, and walnuts and figs from Hāthras. Assafœtida also comes from Hāthras, and areca-nuts from Bombay and Kālpee. Silk cloth is obtained from Gujarāt and Ahmadābād. Kashmir and Afghān shawls are imported by cloth-dealers. Felt caps and Turkish caps are obtained from Bombay and cotton, velvet, and lace caps from Agra, Delhi and Meerut.

Statistics for 1903.

174. The following statement shows the quantity and value of the principal exports and imports for 1903, which was a better year for trade than 1904.

Goods.	Quantity in thousands of maunds.	Value in thousands of rupees.
EXPORTS.		
Wheat	262	6,80
Other grains	267	5,70
Oilseeds	205	8,21
Ghī	4	84
Lac	2	43
Others	6	46
All others (value not known) ..	9	...

Goods.	Quantity in thousands of maunds.	Value in thousands of rupees.
IMPORTS.		
Yarn and piece-goods ..	13	5,74
Sugar	41	2,73
Salt	44	1,55
Hemp and jute	10	84
Kerosine oil	13	46
Metals	3	43
Grain and pulse	6	18
Others	2	18
All others (value not known)...	29	...
Total ...	161	12,11

The total bulk of exports in 1903 was 7½ lakhs of maunds and their value Rs. 22·44 lakhs; the corresponding figures for 1904 being 5⅓ lakhs of maunds and Rs 18 lakhs. Similar figures for imports were 161,000 maunds valued at Rs. 12 lakhs in 1903 and 176,000 maunds valued at Rs 14 lakhs in 1904. The value of the imports has increased from Rs. 9 to Rs. 14 lakhs since 1901. The excess of exports over imports was Rs 10·33 lakhs in 1903, the total revenue of the District in the same year being Rs 5·30 lakhs. In 1904 the excess of exports over imports was only Rs. 4 lakhs or less than the total revenue of the District.

Railway stations.

175. As already stated practically the whole trade of the District is concentrated at Damoh station. Figures of bulk in maunds for the different stations were as follows in 1902 :—Exports : Damoh 334,000, Patharia 11,600, Ghaterā 5,300, Sāgoni 2,300 ; Imports: Damoh 142,000, Patharia 12,000. Sāgoni 11,000. There was practically no trade from Aslāna or Bāndakpur and no import trade at Ghaterā. As already stated a considerable part of the exports and imports from and to Patharia station are for the Garhākotā tract of Saugor.

COMMUNICATIONS.

Former course of trade.

176. At the time of the settlement of 1863 Damoh was completely landlocked, and the only traffic it could transact forced its way laboriously across the border on pack-bullocks. Trade was at that time principally with Mirzāpur and Saugor, salt being obtained from Saugor and sugar, vessels and cloth from Mirzāpur or through it from Calcutta. The road from Damoh joining the Jubbulpore-Mirzāpur road at Jukehī was the most important one in the District. In 1867 the opening of the East Indian Railway to Jubbulpore brought a railway line communicating with Calcutta within 60 miles of the Sonār valley, and 25 miles of the District frontier, and three years later the completion of the Great Indian Peninsula Railway opened a route to Bombay. The District trade was then largely diverted to Jubbulpore. In 1889 the Bina-Katnī extension was opened to Saugor, and in 1895 the extension to Damoh and Katnī was begun. The line was opened as far as Damoh in March 1898 and from Damoh to Katnī in January 1899.

Railways.

177. The railway line passes almost through the centre of the District running parallel with the old Saugor-Damoh road through Patharia and its continuation from Damoh through Bāndakpur to Jukehī. The length of line in the District is 43 miles, and it has six stations at Patharia, Aslāna, Damoh, Bāndakpur, Ghaterā and Sāgoni. The railway thus serves the District very fairly well, the boundary to the north being 38 miles distant from the line and that to the south 43 miles. The southern border is, however, nearer to Jubbulpore station than to Damoh. A project for a light narrow-gauge railway to connect Damoh with the Atarrā-Mānikpur line through Hattā and Pannā is entered in the famine programme of the District. It is estimated that it will be about 151 miles in length and cost something over Rs. 27 lakhs or Rs. 18,000 a mile. It is considered however that the cost of the line

has been underestimated and that it will come to Rs. 36 lakhs.

Trading centres.

178. Nearly the whole trade of the District now converges to Damoh station with the exception of a little from the western corner which goes to Patharia station and of some exports of timber from Ghaterā and Sāgonī.

Main roads south of the railway.

179. Of the three old trunk routes, the Damoh-Saugor, Damoh-Jukehī and Damoh-Jubbulpore roads, the first two have greatly decreased in importance. The Damoh-Jukehī road through Kumhāri is now only maintained as a village track. It is still passable for carts, but the only traffic on it consists of a little timber. The old Saugor-Damoh road was through Patharia, but this was abandoned on the construction of the railway. The new road through Garhākotā was realigned and regraded in 1882-83 and since 1894 it has been partially metalled. It runs for 13½ miles in the Damoh District. This road is not of much importance for trade, but a link running from Garhākotā in Saugor to Patharia station carries a good deal of traffic. The Damoh-Jubbulpore road was for many years the most important in the District, connecting it with the railway at Jubbulpore. It was made a metalled road in 1888, its length within the District being 37 miles. This road is still of great importance as a feeder for the south of the District, and several village tracks converge on to it connecting the principal villages with Damoh. The most important of these is the road from Tejgarh to Abhāna, along which the produce of the Tejgarh tract comes to Damoh joining the Jubbulpore road at Abhāna. Further south Tendūkhedā is connected with Tejgarh by a village track and with Pātan in Jubbulpore by a gravelled road. Timber from Tendūkhedā is generally taken to Pātan, but grain comes on pack animals through Tejgarh to Damoh. Another track leads from Tārādehi in the extreme south through Sehrī, Rāmgarh and Bhūri

to Damoh. This road is also not wholly passable for carts, and traffic along it in the south is generally by pack-animals. From the east of the District tracks lead on to the Jubbulpore road at Nohtā and Jaberā. The village road from Damoh to Jujhār also carries some traffic from the villages south-east of Damoh, and north of the Beārma.

North of the railway.

180. North of the railway there are two important routes the Damoh-Hattā-Gaisābād, and Damoh-Narsinghgarh-Batiāgarh roads. The construction of the latter as a second-class road was undertaken by famine labour but was left incomplete. A considerable amount of traffic passes along this road from the north of the District and from Pannā State. The Damoh-Hattā-Gaisābād road is metalled as far as Hattā, and after this is only a village track. It is also a trade route of some importance for produce from the adjoining Bundelkhand States. Other village roads are those from Hattā to Mariādoh, Hattā to Patnā, and Hattā to Raneh, from Raneh to Sāgoni station through Kumhāri, and from Hattā to Kerbanā through Magron and Ghūgas. The total length of metalled roads in the District is 61½ miles and of unmetalled roads 113½ miles, and the maintenance charges amounted to Rs. 29,000 in 1902-03. Carriage in the north of the District is principally by carts and in the south by bullocks, buffaloes and ponies, as carts cannot travel in the hilly tracts.

Carts.

181. Two kinds of carts are used for traffic, one being called *chhakrā* and the other *rahrua*. The *chhakrā* is the ordinary country cart. The best kind has a wheel of 14 spokes with iron tyres, the hub being made of *reunjhā* wood (*Acacia leucophlœa*) and the remainder of *babul* (*Acacia arabica*). The price of a cart is Rs. 25 and it can carry 15 maunds on a village track and 20 maunds on a metalled road. These carts have only come into general use in the last fifteen or twenty years. The *rahrua* cart is a smaller and more primitive one.

Its wheels are either made in three pieces of solid wood joined by wooden spikes without tyres, or with felloes and four rough spokes. These carts are principally used for the carriage of timber and grass and can travel along the roughest roads. They can carry about 8 maunds. Their narrow sharp edges are very injurious to the roads. Light trotting carts are not used nor are bullocks trained to trot.

CHAPTER VI.

FORESTS AND MINERALS.

FORESTS.

182. The District is covered with large tracts of jungle but contains very little timber of size or value. Seven hundred and ninety-two square miles or 28 per cent of the total area are occupied by Government forests, and 573 square miles are covered by mālguzāri forests of which 246 are tree forest and 327 scrub jungle and grass. Forty-eight per cent or just under half of the District area thus consists of forest or grass land. The largest area of Government forest is contained in the broken and hilly country of the south-west. Another belt traverses the centre on the line of hills passing close to Damoh, and a third tract covers the hill ranges of the north. The broad valley of the *havelī* north of Damoh is entirely bare of Government forest. Much of the forest is of the very poorest description.

Distribution of forests.

183. Teak is the most important tree, but it is only found in any size in the uplands of Mariādoh. Towards the south and east the teak is mixed with *sāj* (*Terminalia tomentosa*), a species of *dhaurā* (*Anogeissus acuminata*), *sāleh* (*Boswellia serratā*), *chheolā* or *palās* (*Butea frondosa*), *tendū* (*Diospyros tomentosa*), *kohā* (*Terminalia Arjuna*), and other species. Towards the west the hilly tracts sometimes opening out into broad flat plateaux are also densely covered with a similar scrubby forest in which some of the above trees and also many shrubs and small trees like *ghont* (*Zizyphus xylopyra*), *makoi* (*Zizyphus Œnoplia*), *ber* (*Zizyphus vulgaris*), *dhāman* (*Grewia vestita*), *kullū* (*Sterculia urens*), *karondā* (*Carissa Carandas*), *aonlā* (*Phyllanthus Emblica*), *achār* (*Buchanania latifolia*) and others are common. Straight stems of valuable species

Timber.

above 3 feet in girth at breast-height are seldom met with, and no useful timber of dimensions larger than the above is available. Patches of bamboo forest of considerable size are scattered here and there. The principal fruit-bearing trees are mahuā (*Bassia latifolia*), *achār*, *tendū*, *jāmun* (*Eugenia Jambolana*), *bel* (*Ægle Marmelos*) and *karondā* (*Carissa Carandas*). The revenue from sales of timber was formerly Rs. 6,000 or Rs. 8,000, but in 1901 and 1902 only Rs. 4,000 were realised. Rs. 3,000 to 4,000 are obtained from sales of fuel and charcoal and something over Rs. 1,000 from bamboos. The bulk of the income is, however, derived from grazing and minor produce.

Grazing.

184. About 150,000 head of stock enter the forests annually for grazing. Those coming from a distance generally stay in them from July to October, temporary shelters known as *khonrās* being erected at convenient centres. In order to improve the quality of the grass considerable areas have been purposely burnt in 1901 and 1902 as an experiment. The quality of the timber is so poor in these parts that no considerable loss is incurred. It is necessary to burn over the ground for several years in succession before the effect can be determined. The revenue from grazing has risen as high as Rs. 35,000 in past years and is now Rs. 25,000 to Rs. 30,000.

Minor produce.

185. The principal minor product is lac, for the production of which the climate is very suitable. This industry began to be largely developed by departmental operations in 1901-02, when the insect was propagated in the northern range on over 90,000 trees. The yield of the year 1902-03 was 360 maunds or about 15 tons of lac, which sold for Rs. 7,000. The departmental expenditure was about Rs. 1,000. The contracts for two other ranges were let for Rs. 3,000 so that the total realisations on account of lac came to Rs 10,000. *Khair* (*Acacia Catechu*) is a common tree, and catechu is prepared from the wood of this tree in Tejgarh, Jamunia in Patharia circle, and

Bijainagar near Jaberā. The bark is stripped off and the wood cut into small pieces and boiled into a thick paste. Then it is placed in a hole in the earth and the water allowed to drain off. The residue is made into cakes and dried in the sun. Its selling-rate is 5 seers to the rupee. The industry is in the hands of Gonds who come from Pannā State and are known locally as Khairwās. They migrate from place to place as the local supply of trees is exhausted. Duty is levied at the rate of Rs. 1 per *handī* or pot in which boiling is carried on. Mahuā fruit, honey and chironji, the fruit of the achār tree, are other minor products. The income from minor produce varies greatly. In 1881-82 it was Rs. 19,000, in 1891-92 Rs. 3,000, in 1901-02 Rs. 7,000, and in 1902-03 Rs. 15,000, the large increase in this year being due to the newly developed lac industry.

Receipts and expenditure.

186. The following figures show the total income from Government forests at the commencement of the last three decades and in 1902-03 :—

Year.	Revenue.	Expenditure.	Surplus.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1881-82 ...	66,000	13,000	53,000
1891-92 ...	59,000	20,000	39,000
1901-02 ...	47,000	35,000	12,000
1902-03 ..	49,000	35,000	14,000

The increased expenditure has been mainly under the head of salaries, while the falling off in income has occurred under all the principal heads and may be attributed to the stricter system of conservation now enforced. In 1902-03 the staff consisted of an Extra Assistant Conservator who was the Forest Divisional Officer for the Division, two

rangers, two deputy rangers, seven foresters and 126 forest guards. Seven hundred and eighty-nine square miles or all but three out of the total area are reserved forest, and 721 square miles of this were protected in 1902-03 at a cost of 11 annas 6 pies per square mile. The protection is of the kind known as B class, the forest being provided with fire-lines but without special watchers. Working-plans have been sanctioned for the whole of the reserved forest.

Private forests.

187. The forest and grass land in private hands covers 573 square miles of which 246 consist of tree forest and 327 of scrub-jungle and grass. The forest is of the same type as the Government reserves and is not particularly valuable. The annual income of the proprietors from private forests is estimated at Rs. 40,000. No private forests are at present notified for protection. The District has no fuel and fodder reserves, but many proprietors and tenants keep a portion of their agricultural land under grass for fodder, and the total area of grass land including that contained in holdings is estimated at 175,000 acres or 273 square miles.

Roadside arboriculture.

188. Roadside arboriculture is carried out on roads under the charge of the Public Works Department, District Council and municipality. The Public Works Department are engaged in planting the Damoh-Hattā, Saugor-Damoh, Damoh-Batiāgarh and Damoh-Jubbulpore roads. The total length of these roads is 94 miles of which 19½ were provided with avenues in 1904. This includes the length both of established avenues and that on which young trees have been planted and are being maintained. Thirteen and a half miles of the total length of avenues are on the Saugor road and 3½ on the Hattā road. Eighteen miles of the Hattā road and 8 of the Saugor road are also provided with avenues of *babūl* (*Acacia arabica*) grown from broadcast seed. The expenditure on plantation and maintenance in 1904 was Rs. 800 only, and as will appear from the above figures progress is slow. During the last

10 years the Public Works Department have planted over 2,000 trees. The Jubbulpore-Damoh road runs through reserved forest for a considerable part of its length and does not require avenues. The District Council are at work on the Damoh-Hindoria, Hattā-Gaisābād, and Hattā-Paterā roads. The total length of these is 50 miles and only 7 miles were provided with avenues in 1904. The Council provide an allotment of Rs. 300 per annum, and out of this trees are planted and watered until they attain a height of ten feet, the saplings being obtained from the Damoh public garden. The amount provided is not sufficient to effect any substantial progress, and no energy is displayed by private persons in the extension of roadside arboriculture. The municipal committee of Damoh has begun planting the roads within municipal limits during the last few years. Avenues exist for about six miles on municipal roads, and the annual expenditure of the municipality is between Rs. 200 and Rs. 300. The trees principally planted are mango, *jāmun* (*Eugenia Jāmbolana*), pīpal, *nīm*, teak, *kohā* (*Terminalia Arjuna*), tamarind, *gūlar* (*Ficus glomerata*), and *babūl*. The last tree is the most common.

MINERALS.

Minerals.

189. The District has practically no mineral products. Iron ore is found in small quantities in the north near the Pannā and Chhatarpur borders, but no appreciable amount is extracted. The hills lying south of Damoh contain good building sandstone, and clear red sandstone is also found in Jatāshankar and near Mariādoh. Grindstones, paving-stones and slabs for fencing are made from the Jatāshankar stone. A good quality of clay for pottery is found at Damoh.

CHAPTER VII.
FAMINE.

190. The only information available on the early famines of Damoh is contained in the historical retrospect in Chapter VI of Mr. Craddock's Report on the Famine of 1896-97. In 1819 the spring crops were destroyed by excessive rain in the cold weather. Acute famine prevailed for seven months and much suffering and loss of life occurred. There is no record of any measures having been taken to relieve the distress. Damoh probably suffered from the scarcity of 1834, when a failure of the rainfall severely damaged both the autumn and spring crops in Saugor, but no information remains of the circumstances of this year. The scarcity was, however, not severe in Saugor. The next scarcity was in 1854. The spring crops were in a most promising condition at the commencement of the cold weather, but heavy rain set in with an east wind, and continued till the whole country was under water. The roots of the wheat and barley rotted in the fields and the stalks and ears were destroyed by rust. Gram was destroyed by thousands of the caterpillars called *illī*. Cattle were driven into the fields but refused to graze on the standing crops. Grain rose to famine prices, and it is recorded that parents sold their children for food. No relief seems to have been given. This year was still spoken of in 1894 as "The Great Blight."

Early famines. 1819, 1834, 1854.

191. In 1868, the year of the Bundelkhand famine, the rainfall was the smallest ever recorded in Damoh, being only 21 inches. The monsoon stopped early in August, during the whole of which month there was less than an inch of rain, and the autumn crops were a complete failure. A fall of 6 inches occurred in September 1868, but this was much lighter in Hattā that Damoh, and did not greatly benefit the spring crops. The

The Bundelkhand famine.

District had already been suffering from short harvests in the two preceding years and the distress in this year was considerable. There was also a large influx of starving wanderers from Bundelkhand. A small sum of Rs. 2,140 was raised by private subscription for the relief of the destitute and Government gave an equal amount from which poor-houses were opened at Damoh, Hattā and Māla. Nothing further seems to have been done until July 1869 when a relief-work was opened on the Saugor-Damoh road. Some 4,000 persons were employed on the road and 1,200 supported in the poor-houses, the numbers relieved not exceeding 2 per cent. of the population. Five hundred and forty-eight deaths were recorded as having occurred from starvation between May and September 1869, and the census of 1872 disclosed a decrease of 5 per cent in the population.

The year 1877.

192. In 1877 the monsoon was again very short, the total fall being 26 inches or the lowest recorded except in 1868. There was, however, some rain in the cold weather and apparently, though the autumn harvest failed, the spring crops were fair. Distress was mainly confined to the starving immigrants from Gwalior and the North-Western Provinces. The bulk of these went in the first place to Saugor and only the overflow came on to Damoh. A road work was opened but the numbers on it never reached a thousand.

The cycle of bad years from 1892. The scarcity of 1893-94.

193. The recent cycle of bad years commenced in 1892-93 when the heavy falls in July and August greatly injured the juār crop, and rainy and cloudy weather lasting through January, February and March induced an attack of rust, and diminished the spring harvest to 50 per cent of normal. In 1893 the monsoon was favourable up to the end of October, when abnormal weather set in and heavy rain in September and October injured the autumn crops and impeded the spring sowings. Seventeen inches fell in Sep-

tember. The weather continued to be damp and cloudy during January, February and March. Rust made its appearance early, and before the end of December the outer blades were beginning to turn yellow. At the end of January the fields presented a remarkable appearance, the stalks of wheat then in full ear though still green, being covered with a powdery substance of a light orange colour. It was impossible to walk through a field without carrying away quantities of it. Early-sown wheat had at this time a good appearance as far as height and size of ear went, and the rust, bad as it looked, was said to have affected only the stalk and leaf and not to have penetrated to the grain. Early in February, however, there were some heavy falls of rain with cold fogs which drove the rust inwards, causing the grain to shrivel or preventing it from forming at all. Late-sown wheat and that growing in embanked fields fared worst, and rotted when it was a few inches high. The crop produced nothing and was commonly grazed off by cattle, but in one village the people set fire to it in order to clear the rubbish off the ground. Even in the early-sown fields the grain was exceedingly scanty, and so light that it could with difficulty be separated from the chaff, the ordinary method of winnowing failing to accomplish this The rust was said to be worse than "The Great Blight" of 1854 by those who could remember the latter. Wheat, which then covered a quarter of the cropped area, yielded less than half the seed grain or a crop of a little over one anna. In this year, however, the autumn crops gave full outturns and the other spring grains yielded half or nearly half a normal crop. Nevertheless this failure was accompanied by a panic among the people such as the later famines of 1897 and 1900 failed to produce People ran out to the fields, and plucking the ears rubbed them between their hands. They blew and the grain flew away with the chaff, and they fled terrified to their villages to tell what they had seen. The second instalment of revenue and instalments of loans due in June were suspended; and the

forests were opened for the free collection of produce, and partially for grazing. Two lakhs were advanced in loans and works were started by the municipalities of Damoh and Hattā besides a Government relief-work for each tahsīl. These were opened in April and closed in November. The numbers on relief reached a maximum of 4,145, and the cost of relief was Rs. 27,000. The record of the harvests would tend to the conclusion that there should have been little or no real distress, but the fact that this existed is shown by the death-rate, which was 40 per mille as against 29 in 1893. The distress was no doubt due to the combined effect of two consecutive poor harvests.

The scarcity of 1894-96.

194. In the following year 1894-95 heavy falls at the end of October did serious damage to the autumn crops, and there was again rainy and cloudy weather in the winter months. The combined outturn was only 49 per cent of a normal harvest as against 54 per cent in 1893-94 and 66 per cent in 1892-93. Following on the two previous years such a harvest naturally could not mitigate the distress, but a test-work opened in the neighbourhood of Damoh failed to attract. Half the revenue was suspended, and the arrears of the previous year remitted, work was provided by the Public Works Department on roads, and poor-houses were supported by private charity. The mortality of the year was 45 per mille, and it is clear that the efforts of Government failed to bring to light the distress which was actually existing. This was probably due to the fact that the people did not realise that Government would take upon itself the burden of supporting them, if they would only make their destitution apparent. The monsoon of 1895 began early and continued with seasonable breaks up to the end of August when it abruptly stopped, and with the exception of some slight and badly distributed rain in September absolute drought prevailed for the rest of the year. The autumn crops were very poor, and much of the spring crop area could not be sown, while except in low-lying land the crops withered. The

fact that the early-sown wheat of the previous year had been least damaged by rust induced many cultivators to put their grain into the ground at the beginning of September, when no rain coming to help it, the young plants rapidly withered under the hot September sun. The combined outturn was 41 per cent of normal or lower than in any of the three preceding years. During 1895 the average price of wheat had been 11½ seers per rupee, as against 12½ seers in 1894, the first year in which it approached famine rates. During the first seven months of 1896 it was 10 seers and a fraction but never again fell to 11 seers. Juār was about 2 lbs. per rupee cheaper than wheat, and gram cheaper still at 13 seers, the outturns of this grain having throughout been better than those of wheat. The District Officers found no symptoms of severe distress at the beginning of the year, and relief measures were restricted to the provision of contract labour on the Saugor-Katnī Railway then under construction, and of one or two road-works for famine labour near Damoh, the maintenance of some poor-houses, and the opening of the forests. All previous revenue arrears and half the current demand were remitted. The roads attracted practically no workers, and in June 1896 there were 18,000 persons at work on the railway, and 600 on roads, while 338 were supported in the poor-houses. Many of the workers on the railway consisted of refugees from Native States. During the rains the number of workers on the railway and roads greatly fell off, but the inmates of poor-houses increased to 985 in September.

195. The monsoon of 1896 was very favourable up to the end of August when it stopped abruptly as in the previous year. During September the Damoh tahsīl received 3 inches of rain and Hattā none at all. No rain was received in October. The autumn crops consequently withered, juār giving 53 per cent of an average harvest and rice 38 or in both cases the same as in 1895. Much of the spring crop land was again too dry to be sown, and this was extremely unfortunate as there was well-

The famine of 1897.

distributed rain in the cold weather, and such fields as had been sown did fairly well. The combined harvests of the year were only 32 per cent of normal. As soon as it became clear that the harvests were again to be lost, acute famine showed itself in a manner which could not be mistaken. Four poor-houses were maintained and 5 relief-works opened in December and 6 more in January, 8 of these being managed by the Revenue Department, and 3 by the Public Works Department. Village relief was started at Damoh in January and extended over the District in the succeeding months. A Government orphanage was also started. The works under the Civil Department consisted of the construction or the repair of tanks at Arthkherā, Madankherā, Pura, Jhālon, Jaberā, Hardua, Māla, Paterā, Patharia and Amjhir. The road-works selected were the Kāntī-Bintī, Abhāna-Tejgarh, Hattā-Gaisābād, Pātan-Tendūkhedā and Damoh-Batiāgarh roads. The initiation of regular relief measures took place in October 1896 and relief continued until December 1897 or for 15 months. The highest number relieved was 60,000 persons in July 1897, and the total number of day-units 11 million. The expenditure was just under Rs. 10 lakhs. Rs. 2¼ lakhs were also advanced in Government loans, and Rs. 2½ lakhs distributed from the charitable relief fund. The value of the concessions granted in Government forest was estimated at Rs. 36,000. Rs. 65,000 were also given out in famine loans for works of improvement. The price of wheat had risen to 9½ seers a rupee in August 1896. It did not touch 10 seers again until March 1898. The average for 1897 was 7½ seers and the highest price 6·9 seers in July 1897. The average price of rice for 1897 was 7·3 seers and of gram 9·3 seers. Juār was considerably cheaper, but during the worst part of the year it was not procurable. The mortality for 1896 had reached the appalling figure of 95 per mille, the death-rate from cholera for that year being 10 per mille. During 1897 the death-rate was lower, but amounted to 76 per mille. The most unhealthy period of the

two years was during the monsoon months of 1897, and next to this the monsoon months of 1896 had the worst mortality. The difficulties of famine administration were greatly augmented by a continual influx of starving refugees from the Bundelkhand States, and a proportion of the death-rate may be attributed to these immigrants.

The years 1898 and 1899.

196. The rainfall of 1897 was only 34 inches, but it was distributed in a manner favourable to agriculture. Both harvests were satisfactory, though masūr, linseed and arhar were damaged by frost in the cold weather; the combined outturn of both harvests was 71 per cent of normal. The rains of 1898 were heavy and extraordinarily continuous, but the autumn rains failed. Juār was damaged by the excessive rain in August and the want of it in October. And the spring crops were again affected by frost, masūr and linseed being almost destroyed, while the outturn of gram and wheat was little more than half normal. The combined result of both harvests was only 41 per cent of normal. Some slight distress ensued among the poorest classes and village relief was given in the *havelī* tract during the hot weather months, the maximum number in receipt of assistance being 2,500.

The famine of 1900.

197. The monsoon of 1899 gave 6 inches of rain in June, 15 inches in July and 7 inches in August, while September was almost, and October and November entirely, rainless. The absence of rain in these months was fatal to the autumn harvest and lamentably reduced the spring crops in area and outturn. Juār gave a half crop, and with the assistance of a shower of rain in January wheat and gram had a 10-anna outturn. Owing to the decrease in the wheat area this result was not so important, however, as it would have been 10 years earlier, when such a harvest would have prevented any distress. The combined outturn of both harvests was 43 per cent of normal or slightly better than in the preceding year. The effect of the two years of poor harvests on a District already

so impoverished was felt in the hot weather when distress became apparent. This was mainly confined to the hilly tracts of the south and north, and the *havelī* was only slightly affected. Relief was started by opening test-kitchens, and this form of assistance was largely employed throughout, 138 kitchens being open in the rains of 1900. The village relief which had been given in the early part of 1899 was stopped in October and revived in January 1900, but the numbers on this form of relief never reached 4,000. No road-works were opened but 12 tanks were constructed or repaired by Government in Kumhāri, Karondi, Majhgawān, Patnā, Padri, Singhpur, Bilgawān, Kundalpur, Banwār, Deorī, Damoh, and Dūmar. The expenditure on these tanks was Rs. 36,000 and little or none of this was wasted, nearly all the tanks proving successful. About Rs. 2,000 were expended on grass-cutting operations by the Forest Department, the grass being cut at the contract rate of 4,000 *pūlas* or bundles for a rupee. This sum included the price of a hay-press and about $4\frac{1}{2}$ million bundles of grass were cut. Nearly 7 million bundles were also cut by cultivators in October and November 1899 in the expectation of a fodder famine in Bombay, but there was very little demand for this and less than half a million bundles were exported. The difficulty of export was increased by the fact that the railway could not provide rolling stock. About 2 million bundles altogether were sold or given away locally and the rest could not be disposed of. Rs. 81,000 were allotted to the District by the Indian Famine Relief Fund, and distributed mainly in grants for the purchase of seed and cattle. About 2 lakhs of revenue were suspended, and Rs. 65,000 distributed in loans from Government. Relief measures lasted from October 1899 to October 1900, the maximum number in receipt of assistance being 43,000 persons or 13 per cent of the population in August 1900. Up till April 1900, however, the distress was very slight and only a few thousand persons needed relief. The expenditure on famine relief was Rs. 3·42 lakhs, the total number of day-units

relieved 5 millions, and the incidence per day-unit Re. 0-1-1. The administration was thus both cheap and efficient. The death-rate for 1899 had been abnormally low at 28 per mille, and that for 1900 was 32 per mille on the population deduced from vital statistics. Practically no mortality can thus be attributed directly or indirectly to famine. The price of wheat went to 9·9 seers in October 1899, and varied between 8 and 9½ seers during 1900, being 1½ to 2 seers cheaper throughout than in 1897. The average price of gram for 1900 was 11 seers. *Juār* was cheaper still, but during the rains was not procurable.

General remarks on famine.

198. With the famine of 1900 the dismal record of failures of the harvest in Damoh comes to an end. Good crops were reaped in 1900-01, and this year has been followed by three more of at least average prosperity. The description of past famines shows that the administration of relief in Damoh is generally liable to be complicated by the influx of starving refugees from Native States for whom arrangements must be made. With this exception famine relief presents no special difficulties, as the communications of the District are good, and the people fairly intelligent. And in view of the results of the proceedings for the conciliation of debts it must be admitted that landlords and capitalists alike are not without public spirit. Failures of the crops have in the past resulted if anything more frequently from untimely rain in the winter months, sometimes accompanied by frost and hail and effecting the destruction of the spring crops, than from shortness of the regular monsoon current. The spring crops, and especially wheat, were until the last decade the more important, but since the famines the area under autumn crops has considerably increased and is now (1904) slightly larger than the spring crop area.

CHAPTER VIII.

LAND REVENUE ADMINISTRATION.

Revenue system of the Marāthās.

199. Under the Marāthā revenue system as it obtained in Damoh, villages were farmed out to the highest bidder, and any rights or consideration which the headmen may have enjoyed in the past were almost entirely effaced. No legal status was given to tenants, and the older cultivators were only protected by custom, which enjoined that so long as the annual rent demanded was paid, their tenure should be hereditary and continuous. Rents were commonly collected from the ryots direct, and when farming was practised very short leases were granted, and the margin left to the lessee on the rental was never more than 20 per cent, generally being very much less than this. The measure, however, which contributed most largely to the impoverishment of the country was the levy of the revenue before the crops on which it was charged could be cut and sold. There were three instalments (giving origin, it is said, to the local term, still current, of *tihai* for rent), levied in July, October and February. The first was nominally due on the autumn crops of the year, but was levied four months before harvest; the third was due on the spring crops, but was levied two months before harvest. The system offered of course good security for default, as the crops were liable to seizure before they could be removed from the ground. But it made borrowing invariably necessary for payment, and to this Mr. Fuller attributes the very great power and importance still enjoyed by professional moneylenders in the economy of the Saugor and Damoh Districts In those days the moneylender was the man who actually paid the revenue, being given in return the right of recouping himself from the ryots. It would be difficult to imagine a more harmful policy, or one more calculated to undermine the recuperative power of a District as well as to destroy its prosperity at the time.

Commencement of British Administration.

200. At the date of the cession in 1818 the land revenue of the District was apparently about Rs. 3½ lakhs, exclusive of the Singrāmpur pargana which was then attached to Jubbulpore. The earliest British settlements were made with the village headmen or farmers for triennial periods. The first entailed a demand of Rs 3·54 lakhs, which was 27 per cent higher than the land revenue of the District as it stood before the settlement of 1893-94. During the three years half a lakh of rupees fell into irrecoverable arrears. The demand was then lowered to Rs. 3·04 lakhs which was collected with less difficulty. At the third settlement it was again raised to Rs. 3·24 lakhs, and large remissions had to be made, partly, however, owing to bad seasons. The revenue dwindled through successive reductions till 1835 when the first long term settlement was made, the period being 20 years and the revenue fixed Rs. 3·05 lakhs.

The 20 years' settlement.

201. This settlement was if anything more unfortunate than its predecessors. It is recorded that landed property entirely lost its value, the mālguzārs throwing up their leases, and leaving large numbers of villages to be managed direct or farmed to moneylenders. At the conclusion of the period in 1855, more than half the villages would have been thrown up had not general remissions been given accompanied in some cases by promises to refund all sums paid in excess of the demand as revised at the new settlement. The making of a new settlement was, however, delayed by the disturbances consequent on the Mutiny for many years, during which period the people struggled on as best they could. The 20 years' settlement expired in 1855, but the succeeding 30 years' settlement was not completed till nine years later. Various causes are assigned in the reports of those days for the difficulties experienced in the collection of the land revenue. The real reason is probably the fall in prices

which followed upon the rigid collection of the revenue in cash, in the absence of any demand for surplus produce. Under the Marāthās a considerable proportion of the revenue was seemingly assigned and collected in kind. And the District maintained two regiments of foot, half a regiment of cavalry, and a battery of ten guns. With the British occupation all troops were withdrawn and the market for produce narrowed accordingly.

The 30 years' settlement.

202. The preparation of field maps and records in detail formed part of the scheme of the 1863 settlement, and the survey, which was carried out under the superintendence of Khān Bahādur Aulād Husain, had the reputation of being the most accurate of any effected at that time. Concurrently with the field survey, a traverse survey on the 4-inch scale was effected by professional agency, but the two surveys were independent of one another, and no use was made by the Settlement Department of the angulation on which the professional maps were based. Preparations for the settlement were begun in 1855; but they were entirely suspended during the Mutiny when all previously compiled records and papers were destroyed. In 1860 measurements were recommenced, and were finally concluded in 1865-66, the new assessment having effect from 1863-64. The settlement was begun by Colonel Maclean who was at the same time conducting settlement operations in Saugor, and was concluded by Mr A. M. Russell who wrote the report. The guide to assessment generally relied on was that called the soil-rate rental. This was obtained by multiplying the cultivated area in a village by a rent-rate which was assumed to represent its real annual rental value. So far as Damoh tahsīl, which was settled by Colonel Maclean, is concerned, it is not clear how the average rates were calculated, but for Hattā tahsīl they were determined by a careful inquiry into and comparison of existing rents. From the results of this inquiry scales of average rates were drawn up. The inquiry was a difficult one, as land

was leased by the *māni*, that is, according to its seed-capacity, and not according to any known measure of area, and as a rule holdings comprised soils of very different descriptions on which a lump rent was paid. Twenty-four *chaks* or groups were formed, and the villages of each group were thrown into three classes, for each of which a scale of rates was fixed. The scale was a complicated one, as it included three rates for each soil according as it was embanked with a large bank, embanked with a small bank or unembanked. Six soils were distinguished, *kābar*, *mund*, *rathia*, *raiyān*, *pataruā* and *bhatua*. Other guides followed were the 'plough' and 'produce' *jamās*. The produce *jamā* was taken as one-sixth of the gross produce. The outturns were calculated at very low rates apparently deduced from the statements of the people of the return yielded by the harvest on the seed sown. The average produce of an acre of wheat in the best soil was set down as only 420 lbs. But the produce *jamās* were only used in the case of a few villages. In Damoh tahsīl the plough *jamā* was calculated by taking the average area capable of being cultivated by one plough as 13 acres; the cultivated area of the village was divided by this figure to give the number of ploughs; and the product of the number of ploughs into one-sixth of the average value of the produce of 13 acres was the plough *jamā*. Apparently the result should have been the same as that of the produce *jamā* unless the value of the produce was differently calculated; but the results arrived at were different. In Hattā the total rental of a circle was divided by the total existing number of ploughs, the result giving the average rental of the land cultivated by one plough; this multiplied by the number of ploughs in the village gave the rental from ploughs, half of which was taken as the plough *jamā*. The guide usually followed in assessment was the soil-rate rental, and the results given by other calculations were employed to check this and to modify uneven assessments.

Reduction of the revenue.

203. The general considerations governing the increase or decrease of assessment are not definitely stated, but it is clear that no enhancement of revenue was looked for. The Settlement Commissioner in his review of the Settlement Report stated 'that owing to the moderation and evenness of the assess-'ment, the District was fast recovering from the severe over-'taxation under which it had formerly suffered.' The revised revenue was fixed at Rs. 2·78 lakhs gross, or Rs. 2·60 lakhs excluding assignments. It was equivalent to a reduction of 2·5 per cent on the revenue payable immediately before revision. The reduction was principally in the Damoh tahsīl. The reduction on the demand fixed at the 20 years' settlement was 9 per cent. The village assets amounted to Rs. 5·21 lakhs and the revised revenue absorbed 53 per cent of the assets. Its incidence per acre in cultivation was Re. 0-10-10. No assessment was placed on uncultivated land, and the 'sāyar' receipts were estimated only at Rs. 4,000.

Rental adjustment.

204. A material difference between the procedure of the 30 years' settlement, and that followed at present (1905), was that the Settlement Officer did not first deduce a rent-rate and then determine the percentage of it to be taken as revenue, but fixed the revenue in the first place, and only subsequently attempted such a readjustment of rents by agreement as seemed to be called for. No mention is made in the Settlement Report either of the procedure followed in rent adjustment or of its results, but a comparison of some statistics collected in 1873 showed that in that year the rental had only risen by 5 per cent on that existing before the 30 years' settlement, so that practically no enhancement of rents can have taken place.

Conferral of proprietary rights.

205. The 30 years' settlement will always be the principal landmark in the agrarian history of the District, as it gave effect to a most radical change in the treatment of the

village mālguzārs or lessees. Hitherto their tenure had been entirely at the pleasure of Government, and indeed it was of so little value that no firmer hold was desired. It was now decided to recognise the mālguzāri status as including the proprietorship of the village, and proceedings for the conferral of proprietary rights formed the most important part of the settlement operations. The headmen were converted into landlords with the ryots as their tenants, but the exercise of the proprietor's powers was substantially limited by the grant of special protection to a large proportion of the cultivators. Of the total area then occupied for cultivation, 16 per cent was in the hands of the mālguzārs as their home-farm or demesne, and 35 per cent was held by ryots who were left in the position of tenants-at-will. Cultivators holding 5 per cent of the area were made proprietors of their plots, and over 40 per cent tenant-right, either absolute occupancy or occupancy was formally recognised. Proprietary rights were reserved by Government in over 4½ lakhs of acres or 29 per cent of the total area of the District. The bulk of this land has since become Government forest. A leading feature in the proprietary right proceedings of 1863 was the endeavour to rectify the evils of past administration by reinstating in their villages mālguzārs of old standing (locally called *watandārs*) who had been forced to give place to speculating farmers. In all 254 of these *watandārs* were restored and made the recipients of the proprietary status. But indebtedness contracted during the period of the farming settlements was, it is to be feared, responsible for much of the pecuniary embarrassment which existed even before the recent cycle of bad years

Currency of the 30 years' settlement.

206. During the currency of the 30 years' settlement the District enjoyed a long succession of fairly prosperous seasons, which coupled with a very light assessment and a largely increased export demand for grain, conferred such

a degree of affluence on mālguzārs and tenants alike as they had never before experienced. The cropped area increased by 30 per cent, the acreage of the valuable rice and linseed crops expanding very largely, while the average rise in the prices of agricultural produce may safely be taken as 50 per cent.

The Settlement of 1893-94. Survey.

207. The accuracy of the village maps prepared at the 30 years' settlement was satisfactory, but unfortunately no steps were taken to correct and keep them up to date during the currency of the settlement. As the time for revision approached it thus became necessary to undertake an entirely fresh survey. This was effected partly by professional survey parties and partly by patwāris. The professional surveyors made a preliminary traverse and provided sheets for each village on which they had laid down the position of survey-marks placed as near the boundary of the village as possible. The patwāris followed the professional surveyors, and with the help of the marks laid down by the latter plotted the field boundaries and other details with the chain and cross-staff. Each man worked in his own circle, the patwāris of some of the largest circles receiving a paid assistant towards the end of the survey. The survey lasted from 1886 to 1890, being delayed at its commencement by the failure of the traverse survey parties to supply tracings of villages in sufficient numbers. The average outturn of each patwāri in the last year of survey was 5·15 square miles. The number of separate fields surveyed amounted to nearly half a million, giving an average of 227 to the square mile of total area, jungle included. The existence of rice cultivation renders the fields smaller in Damoh than in most of the Northern Districts. The cost of the traverse was Rs. 31 per square mile and of the cadastral survey Rs. 40 per square mile.

Procedure of the Settlement.

208. The 30 years' settlement expired in 1893 and 1894 in the Damoh and Hattā tahsīls; but as revision of settlement would become due in 12 Districts within a period of four years and it would be impossible to appoint a Settlement Officer to each District simultaneously, it was decided to frame the revised assessment of Damoh in advance by some years of the date from which it would come into force. The District was therefore brought under revision of settlement in 1888 and Mr. T. C. Wilson was appointed Settlement Officer. He held charge until 1890 and was then replaced by Mr. Dorī Lāl who completed the settlement in 1891, but died shortly after his transfer to Chhindwāra, the exposure and exhaustion due to his work in the hot weather having not improbably contributed to the illness which caused his death. The report was written by Mr. Fuller, Commissioner of Settlements. The method of assessment was that now prescribed for the Central Provinces and included the elaborate classification and valuation of soils by relative factors as explained in the chapter on agriculture, and the fixation of rents according to the soil-unit system. Reference may be made to Mr. Fuller's report (1893) for a detailed description of the methods followed.

Enhancements of the rental.

209. In addition to the revenue payable by mālguzārs and *mālik-makbūzas* or plot-proprietors, the Settlement Officer fixed the rents of absolute occupancy and occupancy tenants. Mālik-makbūzas are not numerous in Damoh. An area of 4,154 acres was held by men of this class revenue-free from Government and this land was excluded from assessment. Of the remaining area (29,236 acres) a considerable proportion is held either wholly or partly revenue-free as against the *mālguzār* or village proprietor, the mālguzār being liable for

the revenue but not entitled to collect it from the plot-holder. The nominal enhancement of mālik-makbūzas' payments was from Rs. 12,900 to Rs. 22,200; but this comparison is misleading in that the former figure does not include, while the latter includes, the full assessment imposed on plots held revenue-free as against the mālguzārs. The moderation of the mālik-makbūza assessment as a whole is established by the fact that it only amounted to 69 per cent of the deduced rental. The incidence per acre was Re. 0-12-2. The payments of absolute occupancy tenants were raised from Rs 1·18 to Rs 1·44 lakhs or by 22 per cent; a very moderate rise in view of the fact that the rents of this class of tenants had remained unaltered since the former settlement. The enhancement was larger in open than in jungle tracts but did not reach 30 per cent in any group. The rental incidence per acre was Rs. 1-1-1, the area held in this right being 135,000 acres. The area held by occupancy tenants had increased during the period of 25 years since the settlement of 1863 from 67,000 to 168,000 acres under the operation of the rule by which the tenure was acquired by 12 years' possession. Practically no enhancement had been made in their rents and the average rental incidence had fallen from Re. 0-14-6 to Re. 0-13-10 on account of the inclusion of inferior land. Their rents were raised from Rs. 1·46 to Rs. 1·72 lakhs or by 17 per cent. The enhancement was much larger in the open than in the hilly groups. The incidence of the revised rental per acre was Rs. 1-0-3, the figure for the most highly assessed group being Rs. 1-9-0. The large class of ordinary tenants were found to be paying Rs. 2·83 lakhs for 250,000 acres or at the rate of Rs. 1-2-1 per acre. No general enhancement of the rents of ordinary tenants was undertaken, but the assessment of rental on land recently broken up for which nothing was being paid, combined with the enhancement for special reasons of

exceptionally low payments, added 6 per cent to the rent roll. The rental incidence was Rs. 1-3-3 per acre. Taking all classes of tenants together, and including the enhancements at settlement and those previously effected by the mālguzārs, the incidence of rent per acre in occupation rose from Re. 0-13-10 in 1863 to Rs. 1-1-10 in 1888 or by 28 per cent in 25 years. The gross increase in the rental was 53 per cent and the increase in area held by tenants 19 per cent during the same period.

Valuation of sīr and khudkasht lands.

210. The rate adopted for the valuation of *sīr* and *khudkāsht* lands (the home farm of the proprietors) was Rs. 1-4-11, as against the incidence of Rs. 1-3-3 per acre of the rental of ordinary tenants, the quality of the former land being much superior. Seven thousand two hundred acres of *sīr* land which were sublet brought in a rental of Rs. 14,353 or about Rs. 2 an acre. The area of *sīr* land was 92,000 acres and of *khudkāsht* 31,000 acres, and the rental valuation was Rs. 1·62 lakhs. 10,500 acres were held rent-free from the mālguzārs, 6,300 acres being in lieu of service. The rental value of this land was Rs. 12,200 and was included in the assets.

Miscellaneous income.

211. The *siwai* or manorial income of the proprietors included receipts from various miscellaneous sources such as the cultivation of *singhāra* or water-nut in tanks, but mainly represented forest income and was in fact the estimated proceeds of the 315,000 acres of jungle (excluding barren waste), included in mālguzāri villages. The income recorded as realised during the year of attestation was Rs. 15,000 and the estimate adopted Rs. 10,900. This fell at a rate of little over 6 pies per acre of mālguzāri forest. In some places the tenants have a prescriptive right to a share in the produce of the trees and care was taken to make deductions on this account.

212. The gross assets at the previous settlement as compared with those now arrived at were as follows:—

Figures of assets.

	At 30 years' settlement.	At settlement of 1893-94 (Attestation 1888-89).
	Rs.	Rs.
Mālik-makbūzas' payments and tenants' rental	4,16,000	6,39,000
Rental valuation of *sīr*, *khudkāsht* and land held by privileged tenants	1,01,000	1,74,000
Siwai income	4,000	11,000
Total ...	5,21,000	8,24,000

The increase in assets during the period of 25 years was Rs. 3·03 lakhs or 58 per cent.

213. The proportion of the assets taken as revenue was 54 per cent on the average in the open country and a little less than this in the hill villages. It exceeded 55 per cent only in two groups, Patharia II and Narsinghgarh I where the payments of mālik-makbūzas were of importance. In the case of mālik-makbūza plots the whole payment is taken as the Government revenue and the mālguzār is allowed only a drawback of from 10 to 20 per cent for the trouble of collection. The average percentage for the whole District was 54 or precisely the same as at the previous settlement. The gross revised revenue as sanctioned was Rs. 4·43 lakhs, being an increase of Rs. 1·63 lakhs or 58 per cent on that previously paid. The increase of revenue was thus in exactly the same proportion as the increase in assets. A half of this was covered by rent-enhancement and the decrease in the income of the mālguzārs was Rs. 1·01 lakhs or 12 per cent of the assets.

The revised revenue.

Rental and revenue incidence.

214. The incidence of the revised revenue per acre in cultivation was Re. 0-11-6 as against Re. 0-9-6 at the settlement of 1863 or an increase of 22 per cent. Of the gross revised revenue Rs. 20,000 were assigned to private persons or temples, and the net revenue was Rs. 4·24 lakhs. The rental incidence varied from Re. 0-5-10 in the Kumhāri group of Hattā to Rs. 1-11-8 in the Batiāgarh group of the same tahsil, while the least and greatest figures of revenue incidence were Re. 0-3-9 and Rs. 1-0-8 in the same groups.

Duration and cost of the Settlement.

215. The revised settlement was made for a term of 12 years running from 1st July 1893 in the case of the Damoh,[1] and the 1st July 1894 in the case of the Hattā tahsil. It was due to expire in 1906. The total expenditure on the settlement including the cadastral survey was Rs. 1·32 lakhs or Rs. 66 per square mile of mālguzāri area. Excluding the cadastral survey the cost of the settlement was therefore only Rs. 53,000 or Rs. 26 per square mile, and it was probably, considering the detail to which operations were carried and the general quality of the work, one of the most economical as yet effected in India. The total cost of survey and settlement was Rs. 99 per square mile.

Reduction of the assessment.

216. Owing, however, to the series of bad harvests which commenced from 1893, the revised revenue was never collected. During the seven years from 1893 to 1900 an outturn in excess of half the normal was only obtained twice. The yearly average loss experienced by the people from the failures of crops was Rs. 28 lakhs, and the average annual collections of land revenue and cesses were only two lakhs or less even than the former demand under land revenue alone. The cropped area fell from 5½ lakhs of acres in 1893-94 to 4 lakhs in 1898-99. Temporary abatements

1 Its introduction was postponed for a year in Damoh and took effect from 1894 in both tahsils.

were first made in 1897-98 in the Rājpurā group of the Hattā tahsīl in which the decline in cultivation was most serious. But this measure soon proved to be insufficient, and in 1899 sanction was given to a general scheme of abatement on lines drawn up by Mr. J. B. Fuller, the Commissioner of the Division. Relief was given only in villages whose cropped area had decreased by a fixed substantial percentage since attestation. In these the rents of tenants and the rental valuation of mālguzāri land were reduced in proportion to the loss in cropped area when this exceeded a fixed percentage in each individual case. The revenue of the village was reduced proportionately. The scheme was applied to 197 villages in Damoh and to 317 in Hattā tahsīl. The total decrease in the rental and rental valuation of home-farms amounted to Rs. 1·46 lakhs; and the corresponding reduction of revenue was Rs. 79,000 falling at 37 per cent of the demand of the affected villages and at 18 per cent of that of the District. The revised net revenue was Rs. 3·46 lakhs.[1] This fell at 10 annas per cultivated acre and at Rs. 1-3-0 per head of population in 1902-03.

Cesses.

217. The demand on account of the road, school and postal cesses for 1902-03 was Rs. 20,000, for additional rates Rs. 7,000 and for patwāri cess Rs. 15,000. The patwāri cess is calculated at 4½ per cent on the land revenue, the education cess at 2 per cent, the road cess at 3 per cent, the postal cess at ½ per cent and additional rates[2] at 2 per cent. The total demand for cesses was thus Rs. 42,000 raising the combined demand for land revenue and cesses to Rs. 3·88 lakhs. The tenants pay 3 pies in the rupee to the patwāri and a sum varying from 1½ to 9 pies in the rupee to the kotwār.

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1 Revenue Secretariat letter No. 1597, dated the 8th April 1902, to the Government of India.

2 This cess was abolished in 1905.

Tenures.

218. Of the total area of 7 lakhs of acres included in holdings in 1902-03, 89,000 acres or 13 per cent were recorded as *sīr* land, 45,000 acres or 7 per cent as *khudkāsht* land, 30,000 acres or 4 per cent as held by mālik-makbūzas, 117,000 acres or 17 per cent as held by absolute occupancy tenants, 127,000 acres or 19 per cent as held by occupancy tenants, 265,000 acres or 39 per cent as held by ordinary tenants, and 12,000 acres or 2 per cent as held rent-free from the proprietors in lieu of service. The area held by proprietors as *sīr* and *khudkāsht* was thus 18 per cent of the total, as against 17 per cent at attestation (1888-89). Between the 30 years' settlement (1863-64) and 1888-89 it increased by 22 per cent as against a total increase in cultivation of 19 per cent. The highest proportion of *sīr* and *khudkāsht* is in the Mariādoh group where it amounted to 25 per cent in the year of attestation. Generally speaking the home-farm area includes a disproportionately large share of the best lands in the village. 17,000 acres of *sīr* land were sublet in 1902-03 at an average rent of Rs. 1-10-0 per acre. At the 30 years' settlement (1863-64) absolute occupancy rights were conferred over an area of 173,000 acres, and during the 25 years up to 1888-89 there was a decrease of 22 per cent to 135,000 acres, mainly owing to the relinquishment of holdings. Looking at the high value which is set on the absolute occupancy status at the present day, it is surprising that it should have been lost over so large an area. But in the days when the status was conferred land was in comparatively little demand, a large proportion of the ryots were habitually migratory and the value of the concession was not understood. Relinquishments were accordingly very numerous during the ten years which followed the settlement, especially during the period of distress which followed the short rainfall of 1868. On the other hand the area held by occupancy tenants rose under the old 12 years' rule from 67,000 to 168,000 acres. Since 1888-89 the area held by absolute occupancy tenants has decreased

by 18,000 acres, and that in the possession of occupancy tenants by 41,000 acres. During the same period the area held in ordinary right has increased. These figures area sufficient indication of the reality of agricultural distress so severe as to induce a relinquishment of this large area held in the superior rights. A fourth of the land held in ordinary right belonged to absolute occupancy or occupancy tenants in 1888-89.

Grain rents.

219. In the north and south of the District Gond tenants frequently pay rent by the 'plough' of land and not by a fixed area. Here also the payment of rent by division of the produce called *bhāg* was until recently very prevalent. The custom occurs in the neighbouring tracts of the Jubbulpore District, and appears characteristic of the country bordering on Bundelkhand. The proportion of the produce to be rendered is fixed at a fraction varying in individual cases or villages from one-third to one-fifth, and the amount to be actually given up at each harvest is determined either by appraisement of the standing crop (*kūt*), or by actual measurement on the threshing floor (*agorā*). Under this system the cash value of the rent rises equally with prices, and the landlord also shares directly in any increase of produce resulting from improvements made by the ryot. If worked fairly the system was not a bad one, but it generally tended to the disadvantage of the tenant, as the appraisers were afraid to incur the displeasure of the mālguzār and would overestimate the crop to the disadvantage of the tenant. The commutation of these grain rents into cash was an important feature of the settlement of 1893-94. Many Gond tenants are also insufficiently supplied with cattle, and much of their cultivation is effected with bullocks borrowed from lowland villages on the *būhi* system under which a part of the produce is paid for their hire. Land is also frequently given out on contract to labourers who take a small plot, and agree to do all the work of cultivation, the owner supplying the seed-grain and

bullocks. When the crop is reaped, the produce is divided equally, the seed-grain being first deducted. Juār owing to the labour involved in its cultivation and the constant watching required to protect it from wild animals and birds is often grown by contract in this manner. When the tenant has a large holding, he will give the outlying portion on contract, and reserve the centre, where the crop requires less protection, for himself.

Ryotwari villages and land alienated.

220. The District contains 52 ryotwāri villages. These are all situated on land which has been excised from Government forest, but are under the management of the Land Revenue Department. The total area held on ryotwāri tenure was 24,000 acres in 1902-03 and the land revenue payable was Rs. 4,000. Leases are given to the headmen on condition that they shall live in the village and receive a commission on collections of revenue at the rate of 2 annas in the rupee. The cutting of teak and certain fruit trees is prohibited. Eight hundred and thirty-six acres of land have been sold outright under the Waste Land Rules. This area is not liable to land revenue but cesses are payable on it. Seven villages were formerly assessed on what was called the *bhaiāchāra* or communal tenure, all cultivators being declared owners of their holdings, and a headman being elected to represent the village in its dealings with Government. This tenure is, however, no longer recognised, and the cultivators who were awarded proprietary right are considered as co-sharers in the village.

Revenue-free and quit-rent tenures

221. Nearly 19,000 acres are held wholly and 84,000 acres partially revenue-free, and the amount of revenue so assigned is Rs. 18,000. All of this land except 2,000 odd acres is comprised in grants of villages or shares of villages. The estate of Hatrī consisting of 30 villages is held on a quit-rent of Rs. 500 a year. The grant dates from the time of the Marāthās, and at the death of the present proprietor the estate will be assessed

to a quarter of the revenue. The estate of Hindoria consisting of 17 villages is held on a quit-rent of Rs. 1,000, the grant dating from the time of Chhatar Sāl of Pannā. The Gobrā estate consisting of 18 villages is held on a quit-rent of one-fourth of the assessed revenue amounting to Rs. 300. This grant also dates from the time of the Marāthās. Bānsa Kalān with some other villages is held revenue-free by a Marāthā family whose ancestor commanded an army sent to the assistance of Chhatar Sāl of Pannā and obtained these villages as a grant from him. The grant has been partially resumed on the alienation by the family of a share in the villages.

CHAPTER IX.

GENERAL ADMINISTRATION.

District Subdivisions and Staff.

222. For administrative purposes the District is divided into two tahsils. Hattā lying north and Damoh south. The Damoh tahsil contains about two-thirds of the total area and population. The old system of pargana subdivisions is not now maintained, but the Damoh tahsīl comprises the former parganas of Damoh, Narsinghgarh, Patharia, Tejgarh and Māngarh, and the Hattā tahsil those of Hattā, Batiāgarh, Phuterā, Mariādoh, and Kotā or Kumhāri. The head of the District is the Deputy Commissioner who is also District Magistrate. His executive staff comprises only one Extra Assistant Commissioner. An Assistant Commissioner in training is sometimes posted to Damoh. Each of the two tahsils has a tahsildār and a naib-tahsildār. The civil staff consists of a District Judge and a Subordinate Judge both of whom have also magisterial powers. A munsiff has been appointed to each tahsil, but in 1904 it was arranged that both should sit at Damoh with jurisdiction over the whole District in order to obtain a more equal distribution of work. Damoh is in the Jubbulpore Division and the Divisional and Sessions Judge of Jubbulpore has superior civil and criminal jurisdiction. There are two benches of honorary magistrates at Damoh and Hattā with 3rd class powers. The District usually has a Commissioned Medical Officer and a Forest Officer of the Provincial Service. Damoh is included in the Saugor Public Works Division.

Land Record Staff.

223. The Land Record Staff comprises a Superintendent, six Revenue Inspectors and 190 patwāris or village accountants. The headquarters of the Revenue Inspectors are at Jaberā, Patharia, Tejgarh and Hindoria in Damoh tahsil, and at Raneh and Fatehpur in Hattā. Each patwāri has on an average seven

villages in his circle, and each Revenue Inspector 31 patwāris to control. The limits of patwāris' circles were recast in 1884 and the number of circles raised from 174 to 190. Previous to the settlement of 1893-94 no regular patwāri cess was levied. The patwāris recovered various dues in kind from the ryots of their circles, the aggregate value of which was put at Rs. 3,340 but was probably much larger. Mālguzārs were also bound under the conditions of the former settlement to subscribe, but the amount of their contributions was fixed in lump sums with very little reference to any principles of assessment. Since 1886 the sums payable by mālguzārs have been collected into the treasury and thence redistributed to the patwāris who have, however, been left to collect their fees from tenants themselves. This system has substantial advantages in the close connection which it secures between the patwāri and the tenants. The patwāri cess is now levied at 4¼ per cent on the land revenue and at 3 pies per rupee of the rental from mālguzārs and tenants respectively. Their total payments amounted under the settlement of 1893-94 to Rs. 28,500 as against Rs. 17,600 under the previous settlement. The value of fees rendered in kind and included in the latter amount has, however, certainly been understated. The patwāris are paid at three rates of Rs. 100, Rs. 110 and Rs. 120 per annum and selected men receive extra allowances of Rs. 10 or Rs. 15. The patwāris are usually Kāyasths, but there are a few Brāhmans and Muhammadans. They do not usually hold service land but many of them have holdings for which they pay rent, especially in the *havelī*.

Litigation and Crime.

224. The people are not noticeably litigious. In 1903 the proportion of suits instituted was one for every 102 persons of the population as against the Provincial figure of one in 110. The character of the civil litigation is generally simple, the bulk of the suits being for money or movable property or for the recovery of rents. The average number of suits instituted annually during the decade 1891—1900 was nearly 3,200. As in other Dis-

tricts civil litigation fell largely towards the end of the decade, but has increased again since 1900, the average for the three years 1901—03 being 2,901 and the figure for 1904, 2,835. The average value of all suits brought has also increased in a striking manner from Rs. 78 during the decade 1891—1900 to Rs. 114 in 1901 and Rs. 185 in 1902. In 1904, however, the average value was only Rs. 85. The criminal statistics of the District present no special features. Owing to its proximity to Native States, outbreaks of dacoity have occasionally been experienced, especially in 1897, but this offence is not usually common. The smuggling of excisable articles has hitherto been a common form of crime and one with which the local police force have found it very difficult to cope.

Registration.

225. The District has three registration offices, that of the District Registrar at headquarters, and of sub-registrars at each tahsīl. Each sub-registration office has a special salaried sub-registrar. At the commencement of last decade the total annual number of registrations was about 600, while the average for the three years 1901—03 was 495. In 1904, 587 documents were registered. The average annual receipts for the years 1891—97 were Rs. 2,533 and for 1901-03, Rs. 1,755. In 1904 the receipts were Rs. 2,000.

Statistics of revenue.

226. The following statement shows the realisations of revenue in the District under the principal heads of receipt, at the end of the last three decades and during the years 1902-03 and 1903-04 :—

Year.	Land Revenue.	Cesses.	Forest.	Excise.	Income-tax.	Registration.	Stamps.	Other Receipts.	Total.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1880-81	2,47,641	18,819	52,099	16,041	...	999	21,752	15,480	3,72,831
1890-91	2,68,941	34,617	58,843	20,373	6,335	2,227	37,136	15,331	4,43,853
1900-01	3,60,226	29,199	35,745	12,838	3,871	1,121	29,605	8,120	4,87,941
1902-03	3,66,225	46,763	49,393	13,722	4,047	1,929	34,909	12,386	5,30,374
1903-04	3,55,298	14,318	60,033	15,945	3,169	1,702	37,679	4,285	5,22,329

Excise.

227. Up to 1905 the outstill system for the supply of country liquor was in force over the whole District. Fifty-five outstills and 83 shops were licensed to retail liquor, this being at the rate of one shop for 34 square miles of area and 3,400 persons, as against the Provincial figures of 12 square miles and 1,500 persons respectively. The Excise Committee of 1903-04 noticed that the excise revenue of the District was absurdly small. Damoh was akin to Saugor, but with ⅗ths of the area and population of this District it had little more than a fifth of its revenue. The incidence of the total excise revenue in 1902-03 was only 7 pies as against the Provincial figure of 3 annas 8 pies, and in 1903-04 11 pies as against 4 annas 2 pies. The revenue from country spirits amounted to Rs. 8,000 odd in 1894 and 1895, but between 1896 and 1903 it did not reach Rs 5,000. In 1903-04 it was Rs. 6,400. The new Central Distillery system was introduced in 1905, but at the time of writing had not begun to be worked. No revenue is derived from *tāri* in Damoh and there is no demand for foreign liquor.

Opium and gānja.

228. The revenue from opium and gānja is also very small, the incidence of revenue in 1902-03 being only 4 pies and 2 pies respectively as against the Provincial figures of 1 anna 4 pies and 4 pies. The revenue from opium was Rs. 8,000 odd in 1892-93, but at the commencement of the next decade had fallen to Rs. 6,000. In 1903-04 it recovered to Rs. 8,000. The revenue from gānja shows a still larger decline from Rs. 6,500 in 1893-94 to Rs. 2,700 in 1902-03. In 1903-04 it recovered to Rs. 4,700. It cannot be doubted that the lowness of the revenue is due to the illicit import of both drugs from the adjoining Native States of Pannā, Bijāwar and Chhatarpur, where both the poppy and the hemp-plant are grown. The excise arrangements of the Central Indian States were brought under

revision in 1905, and it may be anticipated that more satisfactory arrangements for the prevention of smuggling and the control of the excise revenue in States bordering on British Districts will be introduced. Arrangements are in contemplation for the lease to the Central Provinces Administration of the excise arrangements of the Pannā villages lying within the Damoh border. In 1902-03 the District had 23 shops for the retail vend of opium and 38 for that of hemp-drugs. This is equivalent in the case of opium to one shop for every 123 square miles and 12,500 persons, and in that of gānja to one shop for every 75 square miles and 7,500 persons Two shops only were licensed for the sale of *bhāng* in 1902-03.

District Council and Local Boards.

229. The management of schools, dispensaries, pounds and of minor roads with ferries on them is entrusted to a District Council with five nominated and ten elected members, the presiding officers being elected. The average annual income of the District Council for the decade ending 1901 was Rs. 31,000. The principal heads of receipt were local rates Rs. 11,000, receipts under the Cattle Trespass Act Rs. 8,500, contributions from Provincial revenues Rs. 5,000, and ferries Rs. 1,400. The average annual expenditure for the decade was Rs. 30,000, the chief items being education Rs. 10,000, civil works Rs. 8,500, medical charges Rs. 2,700, and cattle-pound charges Rs. 2,400. Under the District Council are two Local Boards each having jurisdiction over one tahsīl. The Damoh Board has three nominated and fourteen elected, and the Hattā Board three nominated and eleven elected members. The Local Boards have no independent income but perform inspection duty and supervise minor improvements. The tahsīldār is usually president of the Local Board. The income of the District Council in 1903-04 was Rs. 47,000 and its expenditure Rs. 51,000.

230. Damoh is the only municipal town in the District. The committee contains three nominated and seven elected members. Its average income for the decade ending 1901 was Rs. 14,000 and its expenditure slightly in excess of this sum. The principal sources of income are market-dues, a house-tax, the conservancy cess, and fees on markets and slaughter-houses. Octroi is not imposed. No water-works have been constructed. The population within municipal limits is 13,355 persons and the average municipal income per head in 1902-03 was Rs. 1-7-5. The income of the municipality in 1903-04 was Rs. 22,000 and its expenditure Rs. 24,000.

Municipalities.

231. Hattā is the only village in the District under the Village Sanitation Act. The Act was applied to it in 1901 on the abolition of its municipal constitution. The receipts and expenditure of the Sanitation Fund for 1902-03 were Rs. 700 odd. Between 1892 and 1903 Rs. 5,000 have been expended in the improvement of village sanitation. For this sum five new wells have been constructed, seven repaired, and ten old *baolīs* or wells surrounded by a parapet and steps have been reconstructed.

Village sanitation.

232. The value of the Government buildings borne on the books of the Public Works Department in the District is Rs. 2·30 lakhs and the annual expenditure on maintenance is Rs. 3,500. Among the principal buildings may be mentioned the District jail constructed in 1856 at a cost of Rs. 49,000 including subsequent additions; the District Court-House built in 1866 at a cost of Rs. 54,000; and the Circuit-House constructed in 1899 for Rs. 20,000. The Church was built in 1869 for Rs. 2,800.

Public Works.

233. The police force consists of 322 officers and men including three mounted constables. The force includes an ordinary reserve of two head-constables and twenty constables at headquarters.

Police.

The District has usually a District Superintendent, 2 Inspectors, 6 Sub-Inspectors and 52 head-constables. In proportion to its area and population Damoh has a strong police force, the figures being one policeman to every 9 square miles and 886 persons for the District as against one to every 10 square miles and 1,128 persons for the Province as a whole. The force is recruited both locally and from the United Provinces; it included in 1903, 72 Brāhmans and 155 Muhammadans. The only railway police in the District are a guard of five men at Damoh station and these belong to the United Provinces Police and have nothing to do with the District force. The annual cost of the police force is Rs. 50,000. The District has 9 Station-houses and 15 out-posts. The Station-houses are located at Damoh, Tejgarh, Jaberā, Patharia and Tendūkhedā in Damoh tahsīl, and at Hattā, Sītānagar, Hindoria and Mariādoh in Hattā tahsīl.

Kotwars.

234. There are 728 kotwārs or village watchmen for 1,116 inhabited villages. The position of the kotwārs was greatly improved at the settlement of 1893-94 and their average remuneration is now Rs. 40-5-5 per annum, the tenants contributing at the rate of from 1½ to 9 pies per rupee of the rental. In small villages, one kotwār is not uncommonly appointed for two or three villages. Some of the kotwārs have service land, and they usually get a pair of shoes from the village Chamār and an occasional free meal from the mālguzār. The kotwārs are usually Khangārs, Chadārs or Basors.

Jail.

235. Damoh has a 4th class District jail with accommodation for 125 prisoners including 16 females. The daily average number of prisoners during the years 1901—03 was 55, 51 and 44 respectively, including an average of 6 or 7 prisoners under trial. In 1904 the daily average was 59. Aloe-pounding and rope-making are the industries carried on in the jail; the raw fibre finds a ready sale in the local market.

236. Up to 1901 education seems to have been in a very stagnant condition in Damoh. The following statement shows the number of schools and scholars at the end of the last four decades :—

Education.

Year.	Public Schools.	Private. Schools.	Total.	Scholars.		
				Public.	Private.	Total.
1871	44	26	70	2,095	665	2,760
1881	44	7	51	2,239	231	2,470
1891	68	...	68	2,167	...	2,167
1901	83	...	83	2,633	...	2,633

A great advance was made after 1901 and in 1902-03 there were 83 schools open and 3,027 pupils in receipt of instruction of whom 127 were girls. In 1903-04 there were 77 schools and 4,384 scholars. The proportion of children in receipt of instruction to those of school-going age was 13½ per cent in the case of boys and ½ per cent in that of girls. The District has 8 secondary schools, two English middle schools at Damoh and Hattā, and six vernacular middle schools at Damoh, Hindoria, Paterā, Raneh, Mariādoh and Patharia. The vernacular middle school at Damoh is managed by the Mission clergy. There are 68 primary schools including 7 Government girls' schools at Damoh, Hattā, Jaberā, Patharia, Paterā, Abhāna and Mariādoh. A technical school is maintained by the Mission of the Disciples of Christ in connection with an orphanage, and a Muhammadan society supports an Urdū school, both of these being in Damoh. The District has one Deputy Inspector of Schools. The expenditure on education in 1902-03 was Rs. 34,000, of which Rs. 8,000 were provided from Provincial funds, Rs 10,000 from local and municipal funds, and Rs. 2,500 from fees. At the census of 1901 Damoh stood 8th in the Province in respect of the degree of literacy of the population, 75 males in 1,000 being able to read and write; 373 females were returned as literate.

Dispensaries.

237. The District has five dispensaries maintained from dispensary funds, a main dispensary at Damoh and branch ones at Hattā, Jaberā, Patharia and Tejgarh. The Tejgarh dispensary was opened in 1902. Damoh has also a police hospital and two private dispensaries, one of which is maintained by the Mission of the Disciples of Christ. The Mission also supports a female hospital. The Damoh dispensary has accommodation for 20 in-patients, and those of Hattā, Jaberā and Patharia for 8, 6, and 2 respectively. The average daily number of indoor patients in the dispensaries maintained from dispensary funds during the decade ending 1901 was 18, and the average attendance of outdoor patients 204. The number of operations performed annually during the decade was nearly 800. The annual income of the dispensaries averaged Rs. 5,700 of which Rs. 2,300 were received from Government, Rs. 1,800 from local funds and Rs. 1,200 from subscriptions.

Vaccination.

238. Vaccination is compulsory only in the municipal town of Damoh, but is carried on all over the District in the open season. The staff consists of a Superintendent with six vaccinators and an apprentice. The hospital assistants also vaccinate the residents of the towns and villages in which their dispensaries are located. The proportion of successful vaccinations per mille of population has varied from 12 in 1896-97 to 35 in 1902-03, this last result being the best ever achieved. In 1903-04 the proportion was 36 per mille. The annual cost of the operations is about Rs. 1,500.

Veterinary Dispensaries.

239. A veterinary dispensary was opened at Damoh in 1903 and maintained by a District Council grant, no charge being made for the treatment of animals. The average number of animals treated at the dispensary for the first eight months of 1904 was 91.

APPENDIX.

GAZETTEER OF TAHSILS, TOWNS, IMPORTANT VILLAGES, RIVERS AND HILLS.

APPENDIX.

GAZETTEER OF TAHSILS, TOWNS, IMPORTANT VILLAGES, RIVERS AND HILLS.

Abhana.—A village in the Damoh tahsīl, 11 miles from Damoh on the Jubbulpore road. Its area is 4,300 acres and the population in 1901 was 1,500 persons as against 1,400 in 1891. The village is the old headquarters of the Mahdele Lodhīs, and the Katrā Belkhedā family of Jubbulpore break a cocoanut when they pass along the road in memory of this. Their tutelary goddess is still located within the ruined fort. The village contains one of the largest tanks in the District, abounding in fish and waterfowl. It has a primary school for boys, a girls' school and a post office. The mālguzār is Seth Dulīchand Baniā of Damoh.

Aslana.—A large village in the Damoh tahsīl picturesquely situated on the right bank of the Sonār. It is 9 miles from Damoh and is a station on the line towards Saugor. Its area is 2,700 acres and the population in 1901 was 880 persons as against 1,150 in 1891. A deep reach of the Sonār some three miles in length extends opposite the village and the scenery is very attractive. The village is in a decaying condition. It is partly walled and contains many ruined houses. The proprietors are Brāhmans and bear the title of Chaudharī claiming to be the descendants of the old Chaudharīs of Damoh. Brāhmans muster strong among the residents and have a bad reputation for turbulence. There is a small cotton-printing and dyeing industry and the village has a primary school.

Balakote.—A village in the Dāmoh tahsīl, 12 miles south-west of Damoh and lying among the hills called the Bālākote range. Its area is 3,600 acres and the population in 1901 was 720 persons, having decreased by four only

during the previous decade. The name is derived from the *kote* or stone rampart running round the village, which is now in ruins. Bālākote is the residence of Rao Takhat Singh of the Kerbania Lodhīs, an old fighting clan. The family was disaffected in the Mutiny, and the village was taken by a detachment of troops who destroyed the fort.

Bandakpur.—A village in the Damoh tahsīl, 9 miles east of Damoh and on the railway line, Bāndakpur being the first station towards Katnī. The village is a mile from the station. Its area is 1,265 acres and the population in 1901 was 1,040 as against 983 in 1891. Bāndakpur contains a famous temple of Jāgeshwar or Siva. The story of the temple is that it was constructed by Bālāji Dīwān, the Marāthā governor of Damoh in 1711 A.D., to whom Mahādeo appeared in a dream saying that he would make himself manifest at Bāndakpur. His image was subsequently found on the spot and the temple was built to contain it. There are two other temples to Pārvati, the wife of Mahādeo, and to Nādia or Nandī his bull. A large fair is held at Bāndakpur on Basant Panchamī in February which lasts for three or four days. Temporary shops are brought here from Saugor, Jubbulpore and Narsinghpur, and cloth, utensils and provisions are sold. The attendance averages about 10,000 persons, but is formerly said to have been as much as 50,000. No dues are imposed, and the manager of the temple has to pay the sanitation charges, the tahsīldār being present to superintend the fair. The management is a hereditary office in the family of Bālāji Dīwān, the present representative being Lakshman Rao mālguzār of Chirotā. Every pilgrim offers at least a pice to the temple, and some offer cocoanuts and areca-nuts. The manager of the temple takes three-fourths of the offerings and the remainder goes to the officiating priest. When people offer prayers at the temple, they make an impression of their hand in red ochre on the wall, fingers upwards, and if the prayer is fulfilled they

return and make another impression fingers downwards. This custom is called *hāthi prasād* or the offering of the hand. If a child is born in fulfilment of a vow he must be brought to the temple when his hair is to be cut for the first time and the hair offered to the god. Pilgrims are said to come to the temple from as far as Lahore. Two flags are planted near the temples of Mahādeo and Pārvati, and it is said that if a lakh and a quarter of people attend the fair, the flags will bend over and meet. Near Mahādeo's temple is a well called Amrati (from *amrit* the divine nectar), and it is said that on one occasion a Sonār girl was crushed by the people and fell into the well and was drowned. The corpse was taken out of the well and placed in the temple, and in accordance with a sign given in a dream, singing and worship were carried on round the well the whole night, and in the morning the girl was restored to life. It is said that it was formerly the practice of devotees to offer their heads to the temple and then cut their throats. Two smaller gatherings take place on the day of Shivrātri in February and on Til Sankrānt in January, but the attendance at these is only local. At Maria Ganji, a deserted village one mile from Bāndakpur, are six or seven large stones with illegible inscriptions. Bāndakpur has a primary school. The proprietor is a Baniā.

Bansa Kalan.—A village in the Damoh tahsil, 17 miles west of Damoh, and two miles from Patharia Station on the road to Garhākotā. Its area is 6,200 acres and the population in 1901 was 2,220 persons as against just under 2,300 in 1891. Bānsa and four other villages are held revenue-free by the descendants of Pilāji, the Marāthā general who led an army sent by the Peshwā to the assistance of Chhatar Sāl of Pannā against the Mughal Viceroy Muhammad Khān Bangash. The grant was made by Chhatar Sāl to Pilāji and his descendants, who are Brāhmans and reside in Poona. Most of the co-sharers of the village are heavily involved and the greater part of the village is held by a mortgagee (Pahlād Singh of Dharampurā) in satisfaction of his decretal debt of about

Rs. 22,000. Only a half share is still held revenue-free, the rest having been resumed owing to alienations. The village is one of the most fertile in the District and has a large stretch of first-rate black soil. The tenants are principally Dāngis, many of whom are well-to-do. There are a number of sugarcane gardens. A considerable hand-weaving industry exists, the village containing about 150 houses of Korīs who weave coarse cloth. There is a primary school.

Batiagarh.—A village in the Hattā tahsīl 21 miles north-west of Damoh, with which it is connected by a metalled road. It stands on a stream called the Baink or Jhūri, an affluent of the Sonār, the word *jhūri* signifying a stream which dries up in the hot weather. Its area is nearly 3,000 acres, and the population in 1901 was 800 as against 1,050 in 1891. Batiāgarh was formerly the headquarters of the pargana to which it gave its name. It was the seat of government under the Muhammadans and subsequently the residence of a Marāthā Amil. It has a ruined fort and a large well containing a Persian inscription. The inscription states that 'The 'well was built in the time of the governor Jalal-ud-dīn in the 'reign of the just and pious monarch to whom all Hindus paid 'respect, and by whose sword the whole of Turkistān was 'subdued'. This refers to one of the Mughal Emperors, but which one is not known. A number of other inscriptions have been collected in the police building and there are also some *satī* pillars. Batiāgarh has a police outpost and there is an encamping ground. The proprietor is a Lodhī.

Bearma River.—A river which rises in the Rehlī tahsīl of Saugor and flows from south-west to north-east of the Damoh District in a tortuous course. During the last part of its length it forms the boundary between Damoh and Pannā State and joins the Sonār just beyond the border. Four miles further on the united stream falls into the Ken. The Beārma traverses the most rugged portion of the District, and during the greater part of its course is confined between rocky cliffs, while such valleys as open out are nowhere extensive.

It passes Tārādehī, Nohtā, Jujhār, and Gaisābād and is crossed by a causeway at Nohtā and a railway bridge at Ghaterā station. Its length is about 120 miles and the fall in its course during this distance is 700 feet or nearly 6 feet in a mile. Its velocity in flood-time is therefore consider able. Its greatest width is about 350 yards at the village of Mohnā some two miles south of its junction with the Sonār.

Bewas (Bias) River.—A river which rises in the Sirmau hills of Bhopāl State close to the south-western boundary of Saugor. Passing into Saugor it flows from south-west to north-east draining the east of Saugor and the south-east of Bandā tahsīl. It passes close to Jaisinghnagar and within ten miles of Saugor where it is crossed on the Damoh road by an iron suspension bridge constructed in 1832 by Colonel Presgrave, Mint-master at Saugor. The bridge which is of 200 feet span was constructed entirely by native workmen with Tendūkhedā iron at a cost of Rs. 48,000. It is also crossed by the Saugor-Damoh Râilway at Lidhorā. A little north of Bandā the river turns east through a gorge into the Damoh District, and passing Panchamnagar joins the Sonār about three miles from Narsinghgarh. Its length is about 92 miles.

Chodra.—A small village in the Damoh tahsīl near Māla and some 20 miles from Damoh. Its area is 700 acres and the population in 1901 was 910 persons, having decreased by 60 during the decade. A small fair is held here on the 11th *Kārtik* Sudī (November-December) lasting for a week, at which 1,000 to 1,500 persons assemble. A few temporary shops are opened by tradesmen from Jubbulpore and Pātan. The village has a primary school. The proprietor is a Lodhī.

Damoh Tahsil.—(23° 10′ to 24° 4′ N. and 79° 3′ to 79° 57′ E.) the southern tahsīl of the District, lying east of Saugor, north of Narsinghpur and Jubbulpore, west of Jubbulpore and south of the Hattā tahsīl. The area of the tahsīl is 1,797 square miles or about

Natural features.

two-thirds of that of the District. The southern boundary of the tahsīl as of the District is well defined by the Bhānrer range running west and east and effectively separating Damoh from Narsinghpur and Jubbulpore. At Katangi the Bhānrer range gives place to the Kaimur. The north-western portion of the tahsīl takes in a strip of the open plain bordering the Sonār river called the *havelī*, but the greater part of it is an alternation of low hills and narrow landlocked valleys. Some of these, however, are very fertile and contain the best black soil in the District, notably those of Abhāna, Tejgarh, Jaberā, Māla and Singrāmpur. The south-west of the tahsīl is very hilly and contains large tracts of forest. Five hundred and forty-three square miles or 30 per cent. of the total area are occupied by Government forest. The Sonār river crosses the south-west of the tahsīl, while the Beārma flows diagonally across it from south-west to north-east, and with its tributaries the Guraiyā, the Sūn and the Pathri drains the greater part of its area. The small valley of Singrāmpur is drained by the Phalkū, a tributary of the Nerbudda.

Population.

The population of the tahsīl in 1901 was 183,316 persons or about two-thirds of that of the District. In 1891 the population was 195,937 and in 1881, 187,897. The increase between 1881 and 1891 was 4·3 per cent. or very nearly the same as the District figure; between 1891 and 1901 the decrease was 6·5 per cent. as against the District figure of 12·4 per cent. Damoh fared better during the decade than Hattā as it has a larger area under autumn crops, which taking the bad years as a whole gave larger outturns than the spring crops. The density of population is 102 persons per square mile, and the tahsīl contains one town Damoh and 692 inhabited and 152 uninhabited villages. The villages containing a population of over 1,000 persons in 1901 were Abhāna, Bānsa Kalān, Bilai, Banwār, Bohterai, Dhigsar, Hindoria, Jaberā, Jairat, Kishenganj, Kidarao, Khajrī, Keolāri, Nadrai, Pathariā, Satpāra, Sītānagar and Tejgarh.

Agriculture.

The hill valleys already referred to contain good black soil, on which double crops are frequently grown in embanked fields. Higher up the valleys and on the slopes is shallow dark sandy soil on which rice or inferior crops are grown. Excluding Government forest 52 per cent. of the total area was occupied for cultivation in 1902-03. The proportion of occupied area is somewhat smaller in Damoh than in Hattā, owing to the larger quantity of unculturable hilly land which the tahsil contains. The following figures show the statistics of cropped area at settlement and in the last few years:—

Year.	Rice.	Kodon and Kutki.	Wheat.	Gram.	Linseed.	Til.	Total cropped area (includes double-cropped area).
	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.
At last settlement 1888-89	46,084	35,968	146,631	15,764	10,898	...	322,651
1900-01 ...	45,458	36,720	77,929	27,303	10,603	...	285,444
1901-02 ...	51,093	42,177	86,999	35,525	11,629	...	305,072
1902-03 ...	51,219	40,520	92,150	33,436	13,849	27,340	327,751
1903-04 ...	46,518	43,583	108,010	26,503	12,695	29,956	317,210
Percentage of area under each crop on the area under crop as shown in the last column, 1903-04.	15	14	34	8	4	9	

The total area cropped fell as low as 285,000 acres in 1900-01, a decrease of 11½ per cent. on the settlement figure. In 1902-03 the acreage under crop was 328,000 or 6,000 acres in excess of that at settlement, but it again decreased to 317,000 in 1903-04. Wheat is more often grown in embanked fields in Damoh than in Hattā, and for this reason is less

frequently mixed with gram, which is required in unembanked fields to prevent the exhaustion of the soil Damoh tahsil has nearly the whole of the rice sown in the District, about two-thirds of the kodon and about half the til and linseed. The bulk of the double-cropped area is also in this tahsīl. The deterioration in cropping since settlement is not nearly so severe in Damoh as in Hattā.

Land-revenue.

The land-revenue at the 30 years' settlement was Rs. 1·55 lakhs and fell at less than 53 per cent of the assets. At last settlement (1893-94) the revenue was raised to Rs. 2·51 lakhs giving an increase of Rs. 96,000 or 62 per cent on the previous figure as against the District percentage of 59. The new revenue absorbed 52 per cent of the assets. The average rental incidence per occupied acre was Rs. 1-1-4 and the revenue incidence on the cultivated area Re. 0-11-0. Since the settlement the revenue has been permanently reduced to meet the agricultural deterioration in the tahsīl and the demand for 1902-03 was Rs. 2·11 lakhs showing a decrease of 16 per cent on the settlement figure. The demand for cesses in the same year was Rs. 17,000. For the purposes of assessment the tahsīl was divided into the following 16 groups, the number of villages contained by each being noted in brackets :—Sarrā (31), Bālākote (51), Tārādehī (78), Jaberā (74), Māla (67), Sailwāra (51), Tejgarh (55), Abhāna (62), Banwār (34), Bāndakpur (39), Damoh two groups) 108), Narsinghgarh two groups (89), Patharia two groups (55). Patharia, Narsinghgarh and Damoh were the most highly assessed groups with a revenue-rate of Re. 0-10-9 to Rs 1-0-5, then Abhāna, and next Banwār, Māla and Tejgarh with a revenue-rate of 8 annas odd, while in the remaining groups the revenue was below 8 annas and in Sarrā only 4 annas 5 pies.

Miscellaneous.

Under the old pargana system, the following five parganas made up the tahsīl—Patharia with 55 villages, Narsinghgarh with 92,

Damoh 213, Māngarh 122 and Tejgarh 270 The tahsīl has four Revenue Inspector's circles with headquarters at Jaberā, Patharia, Tejgarh and Hindoria and 110 patwāri's circles; it has five police Station-houses at Damoh, Tejgarh, Jaberā, Patharia and Tendūkhedā and eight outposts.

Damoh Town.—The headquarters town of the District situated at 23° 50′ N. and 79° 27′ E. Damoh is a station on the Bina-Katnī branch of the Indian Midland Railway 702 miles from Bombay and 712 from Calcutta by rail. It is 48 miles from Saugor and 65 from Jubbulpore by road. The population in 1901 was 13,355 persons as against 11,753 in 1891, 8,665 in 1881 and 8,189 in 1872. Damoh is the 15th town in the Central Provinces in size and is increasing in importance The elevation of the town is 1,236 feet. It stands below some stony hills which radiate the heat in the hot weather, thus increasing the temperature, which but for this would be very moderate.

Descriptive.

The name is traditionally derived from Damyantī, the wife of Rājā Nal of Narwar, a personage who is known only to folklore. The town seems to have first become of some importance in the 14th century when it was occupied by the Muhammadans. A Persian inscription now lying near the District Court-House and which was brought originally from the old fort is dated 1383 A. D. During Akbar's time the District was attached to the Sūbah of Mālwā and an Amil was posted at Damoh. It was a rule of Akbar's in his central towns, to build two houses for the temporary lodging of Hindu and Muhammadan religious mendicants, who were also supplied with food during their stay. These houses were called Khairpur and Dharampur, and the name of Dharampur seems to have survived in the modern quarter of Dharampurā on the west of the town, where the Hindu mendicants apparently settled down, as it was a separate village held by Bairāgis at the 30 years' settlement. Damoh was subsequently the seat of a Marāthā governor. At the commencement of British

Historical.

rule the headquarters of the District were fixed at Hattā and were removed to Damoh in 1838. During the Mutiny the town was abandoned by the civil officers and held only by the friendly troops of the Rājā of Pannā. It was attacked by the mutineers of the 52nd Native Infantry who defeated the Pannā troops, plundered the town, and burnt the District Office with the records.

Buildings.

Most of the Hindu temples were destroyed by the Muhammadans and the materials used to build a fort, which has in its turn been destroyed, so that practically no buildings of interest remain. A number of old sculptures have been collected on a platform near the Phuterā tank, among which are two well-carved figures of Siva and Pārvati and another standing figure, probably Vishnu. A large number of carved stones and images have also been collected in the Deputy Commissioner's garden, among them being a fine entrance-porch of a temple. Under a tree near the Deputy Commissioner's Court are three stones containing inscriptions, one of them being the Persian inscription already alluded to, and another a Sanskrit inscription of 25 lines without a date. Of the modern buildings the principal are the town-hall constructed in 1886 at a cost of nearly Rs. 12,000, the new market-place and the District and tahsīl offices and the jail. Three of the hillocks in and near the town contain the tombs or shrines of Muhammadan saints. One of these is Saiyid Māsrud, the general of Mahmūd of Ghaznī, who is really buried at Bahraich, but the common people believe that the shrine in Damoh is his tomb. A small gathering is held there on the first Sunday in Jeth (April-May). Two old mosques belonging to the Muhammadan period also remain. The Patharia and Baidrā quarters contain a number of Muhammadans, the descendants apparently of the Muhammadan garrison or town guard. They are now in great poverty, and live like members of one family though of different tribes, electing one of their number once a quarter as a Jemadār.

Municipal undertakings.

Damoh was created a municipality in 1867. The committee consists of three nominated and seven elected members The average municipal receipts for the decade ending 1901 were Rs. 14,000 and the expenditure was slightly larger. The principal heads of receipt were house-tax Rs. 3,000, conservancy Rs. 1,100, market-dues Rs. 1,000, fines in cattle-pounds Rs. 1,600, and fees on markets and slaughter-houses Rs. 723. Octroi is not levied. The chief items of expenditure were conservancy Rs. 3,350, medical charges Rs. 1,000, roads Rs. 1,500, and education Rs. 3,500. The municipal area includes parts of the villages of Damoh and Hirdepur. Of the total area of 2,521 acres, a little over 1,000 acres are *nazūl* or Government property. The proprietors of Damoh are two Oswāl Baniās who possess several other villages.

Wells and tanks.

The town has no waterworks and the water-supply is obtained from tanks and wells. The number of wells is not large and as the soil is very porous the water in them is liable to give out. There are eight tanks, the largest being the Phuterā tank to the north of the town. This is said to have been built by a Banjārā during the period of Gond supremacy; the tank was improved and the bathing ghāts constructed at a cost of Rs. 25,000 by Mr. Thompson, Deputy Commissioner, in 1879. Some further improvements were made in the famine of 1899-1900. The Purenā tank to the east was built by the Muhammadans, and the Diwānji tank near the Dāk Bungalow is named after the Marāthā governor Bālāji Diwān whose wife committed *satī* on its banks. The Hazāri tank was also built under the Marāthās, and the remainder after the commencement of British rule.

Manufactures and trade.

Damoh is the collecting and distributing centre for the District trade, and is a fairly important commercial town. A new *ganj* or grain-market is being constructed near the railway-station. Damoh has the only weekly cattle-market in the District;

it is held on Wednesdays. An extensive cattle-slaughtering industry has lately sprung up. Various handicrafts as the manufacture of vessels of brass and bell-metal, pottery, weaving and dyeing are carried on in the town. The *chilams* or pipe-bowls made here are exported to Jubbulpore and other places. They are made of a light reddish stone which takes a good polish, and are coated with mica to make them sparkle. Tasar silk imported from Seonī is woven locally. Bangles of glass and lac are also made. A number of betel-vine gardens are situated in the environs of the town, and the leaf grown is exported. *Singhāra* or water-nut is grown in the tanks.

Educational and other institutions.

Damoh has an English middle school with 142 pupils enrolled in 1902-03, two Hindī branch schools, a girls' school, an Urdū school under the management of a Muhammadan society and another primary and technical school maintained by the Mission. It has four dispensaries, including Mission and private charitable dispensaries and the police hospital. A veterinary dispensary was opened in 1903. A station of the American Unsectarian Mission known as the Disciples of Christ was established here in 1894, and its staff comprises several Europeans. An area of 348 acres of Government land has been let to the Mission for the location of a farm, and several schools and other institutions are also maintained from its funds. Damoh has a bench of Honorary Magistrates.

Fatehpur.—*A village in the Hattā tahsīl* 27 miles north of Damoh and 9 miles from Hattā. Its area is 1,900 acres, and the population in 1901 was 1,500 as against 2,400 in 1891, having thus decreased by about 30 per cent during the decade. Fatehpur formerly belonged to the Rājā of Shāhgarh and was the headquarters of a revenue officer. It is named after one of these officers Fateh Singh, who in 1643 A. D. built a fort at Jatāshankar about four miles north of the village. It was incorporated in Damoh on the confiscation of the Shāhgarh territories in 1860. There is a small

hand-weaving industry, and the village contains a number of Bharias who collect honey and lac. Fatehpur has a police outpost, primary school and post office and is the headquarters of a Forest range officer. The village formerly belonged to a Kurmī family, who lost it, and is now divided among shareholders of different castes.

Gaisabad.—A village in the Hattā tahsil 16 miles from Hattā on the gravelled road towards Nāgod. Its area is 2,400 acres, and the population in 1901 was 900 persons showing an increase of about 60 during the decade. Gaisābād was an important place under the Bundelās. A considerable amount of trade now passes through it from the surrounding territory of Bundelkhand to Hattā. An annual fair is held here lasting for about 15 days in the month of Phāgun (February-March). The total attendance at the fair is about 4,000 persons. The village has a primary school and police outpost and a weekly market is held on Tuesdays. The proprietor is a Kāyasth.

Harat.—A small village in the Hattā tahsil 3 miles north-west of Hattā. It stands on the left bank of the Sonār, and close by is a small waterfall in the river. Its area is 1,800 acres and the population was 350 persons in 1901 and 1891. Harāt was a place of some importance under the Bundelās and contains the ruins of some Muhammadan tombs. The proprietor is a Brāhman.

Hatri.—A small village in Damoh tahsil 12 miles south-east of Damoh and on the Beārma river. Its area is 1,250 acres, and the population in 1901 was 350 persons as against 470 in 1891. Hatrī is the headquarters of the petty Rājā of Hātrī who holds an estate of 32 villages on quit-rent tenure and is the head of the Lodhi caste in Damoh. The present representative is Rājā Harbans Rai.

Natural features.

Hatta Tahsil.—(23° 43' to 24° 26' N. and 79° 8' to 79° 52' E.) the northern tahsil of the District. On the north and east it is bounded by the States of Pannā, Bijāwar and Chhatarpur, on

the west by Saugor District and on the south by Damoh tahsil. The bulk of the tahsīl consists of an open black-soil plain in the valley of the Sonār river, called the *havelī*, with a belt of hill and forest country forming the scarp of the Vindhyan range to the north. Its area is 1,019 square miles or about a third of that of the District: 249 square miles or 24 per cent of the total are occupied by Government forest.

Population.

The population of the tahsīl in 1901 was 102,010 persons or about a third of that of the District. In 1891 the population was 129,676 and in 1881, 125,060. The increase between 1881 and 1891 was 3·7 per cent as against 4 per cent for the District as a whole, and the decrease between 1891 and 1901, 21·3 per cent as against the District figure of 12·4 per cent. Hattā suffered very severely during the decade from continual failures of the spring crops. The density of population is 100 persons per square mile, and the tahsīl contains 422 inhabited and 141 uninhabited villages. The following villages had a population of over 1,000 persons in 1901—Bārdha, Bhainsā, Fatehpur, Ghugrā Kalān, Hattā, Khaderī, Kerbanā, Kaithorā, Luhāri, Mariādoh, Paterā, Phuterā Kalān and Raneh.

Agriculture.

The *havelī* or Sonār valley is a level and slightly undulating tract, covered with the friable loam known locally as *mund*. On the northern hills the soil is generally poor though there are one or two small villages of some fertility. Excluding Government forest, 57 per cent of the available area is occupied for cultivation. The figures on the next page give the statistics of the principal crops at settlement and in recent years. In 1900-01 the cropped area was 23 per cent less than at settlement and in 1903-04, 14 per cent. The soil of the *havelī* is liable to be overrun with *kāns* grass, and during the late succession of bad years the diminished resources of the cultivators prevented them from making head against this

Year.	Rice.	Kodon and Kutkī.	Wheat.	Linseed.	Gram.	Til.	Total cropped area (includes double-cropped area).
	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.
At last settlement (1888-89).	6,633	24,512	96,792	9,303	17,434	...	227,697
1900-01 ...	5,485	20,752	30,672	9,397	22,789	...	174,583
1901-02 ...	5,825	24,124	36,429	10,448	32,797	...	185,778
1902-03 ...	6,253	23,754	35,915	11,037	25,808	22,093	196,516
1903-04 ...	4,751	23,721	46,010	11,666	18,558	28,633	196,429
Percentage of area under each crop on the total area under crop as shown in the last column, 1903-04.	2½	12	23½	6	9½	14½	

weed. The fields of the *havelī* are very seldom embanked, and wheat is largely sown mixed with gram to keep up their productive capacity. Hattā has scarcely any rice, and very few fields are double-cropped. At settlement it contained two-fifths of the wheat area of the District, but in 1903-04 only a third. And in this year the area under gram even was smaller than in Damoh. The deterioration in cropping in Hattā resulting from the famines has been much more severe than in Damoh.

Land-revenue.

The land-revenue at the 30 years' settlement was Rs. 1·23 lakhs which fell at 53 per cent of the assets. This was raised at last settlement (1893-94) to Rs. 1·92 lakhs or by 56 per cent, the revised revenue falling at 54 per cent. of the assets. The average rent-rate for the tahsil was Rs. 1-2-6 per occupied acre and the revenue-rate on the cultivated acre Re. 0-12-4. Since the settlement the revenue has been permanently reduced to meet the agricultural deterioration of the tahsil and in 1902-03 the demand was Rs. 1·37 lakhs showing

a decrease of nearly 29 per cent on the settlement figure. For the purposes of assessment the tahsīl was divided into the following eight groups, the number of villages contained in each being shown in brackets against it—Batiāgarh (83), Fatehpur (81), Mariādoh (23), Hattā (171), Paterā (63), Bilgawān (17), Kumhāri (48), Rājpurā (60). The Batiāgarh group had the highest revenue incidence with Rs. 1-0-8 per acre, then Hattā, Fatehpur and Paterā, and next Mariādoh, while Bilgawān, Rājpurā and Kumhāri were the poorest groups, the incidence in the last being only 3 annas 9 pies an acre.

Miscellaneous.

Under the old pargana system the following five parganas made up the tahsīl—Fatehpur with 134 villages, Batiāgarh 126, Hattā 171, Paterā 76, and Kotā 52. The tahsīl is divided into two Revenue Inspector's circles with headquarters at Raneh and Fatehpur, and 80 patwāri's circles. It has four police station-houses at Hattā, Sītānagar, Hindoria and Mariādoh and seven outposts.

Hatta Village.—The headquarters village of the Hattā tahsīl, 24 miles north-east of Damoh with which it is connected by a metalled road. Its area is 958 acres, and the population in 1901 was 4,365 as against 5,801 in 1891. The village stands on the Sonār river, whose bed here is deep and unbroken by rocks, and affords some picturesque scenery. The name is traditionally derived from that of a Gond Rājā *Hattay* who is supposed to have founded the village as early as the 11th century. An old fort now in ruins stands near the river which was constructed by the Bundelās in the 17th century and enlarged and improved by the Marāthās. The fort is built of rubble and mortar and has large towers sloping upwards. It is surrounded by a moat partly artificial and partly natural, which flows into the river. The village contains an old temple of Chandī Devī which is held especially sacred and much resorted to in epidemics, and another temple of Mahādeo built by Musammāt Bahūju Hazārin, an ancestress of the present

proprietor of the village. Hattā with four other villages is assigned for the maintenance of the temple. The same lady built the fine *ghāts* or flights of steps which lead down to the Sonār river. Hattā was formerly a municipality, but its municipal constitution was abolished in 1901, and the provisions of the Village Sanitation Act brought into force. The average income of the sanitation committee for the three years 1901—04 was Rs. 633. The village is not now prosperous and its trade is declining. The principal articles of export are ghī, which is sent to Calcutta, and grain. Some Mochīs in the village make clay toys, bind books and make country saddles and Hindu playing-cards, and paint designs on walls and temples. Vessels of brass and bell-metal are also made and a particularly bright polish is imparted to the metal by the local craftsmen. There is a considerable hand-weaving industry. Two weekly markets are held, the principal one on Friday and another on Monday. Hattā has an English middle school constructed in 1867 at the cost of Rs. 4,200 from a design obtained from France. Its strength is only 48 pupils. It has also two branch schools and a girls' school. Besides the ordinary tahsīl staff there is a bench of honorary magistrates, and a police Station-house, post office and dispensary are located here. A dāk bungalow has been built on the bank of the Sonār and there is a military encamping-ground. Thākur Pratāp Singh Hazāri, the representative of a good Rājput family, manages the village on behalf of the temple.

Hindoria.—A large village in the Damoh tahsīl 10 miles north-east of Damoh with which it is connected by a gravelled road, and 3 miles from Bāndakpur station. Its area is just on 14,400 acres, and it is the largest village in the District. About two-thirds of the area are waste land. The population in 1901 was 3,100 persons as against 3,800 in 1891. Hindoria is supposed to have been founded in the year in which Akbar ascended the throne or 1555 A.D. But the date of Samvat 1113 or A.D. 1056 has been found on one of a number of

satī pillars in the village. Many carved stones and remains of temples also exist. To the south of the village on the top of a hill stands a small fort built about 1600 A.D. This was broken down in the Mutiny by a detachment from Saugor, the Lodhī proprietor of Hindoria having risen in revolt and looted the Damoh treasury at the instigation of the Rājā of Shāhgarh. The founder of the present village is supposed to have been Thākur Budh Singh who built the fort. One of his descendants Kishore Singh rebelled during the Mutiny, and the estate was subsequently confiscated but restored to his nephew Umrao Singh, the father of the present proprietor, Raghurāj Singh, who holds 15 other villages on quit-rent tenure. Most of the inhabitants are Lodhīs and a number of them hold mālik-makbūza plots. The village has a number of betel vine gardens and the leaf grown here is considered to be especially good. Three varieties are grown Bilehrā, Bengalī, and Ratanpuria, and the leaves are sent to Northern India. Good white sugarcane is also grown here. The village has a small industry of workers in bell-metal and brass, and a number of cloth-weavers and dyers in indigo. A weekly market is held on Saturdays. Hindoria has a police Station-house, a vernacular middle school with 101 pupils and a post office. The police building contains a room for inspecting officers. The village has several tanks, but all of them are said to dry up in years of drought.

Jabera.—A large village in the Damoh tahsīl 28 miles from Damoh on the Jubbulpore road. Its area is about 800 acres, and the population in 1901 was 1,650 persons as against 1,700 in 1891. The village contains a tank which was improved in the famine of 1896-97. It has a small iron-working industry and *sarotās* or nut-cutters, knives, hatchets, and pickaxes are made. A dispensary is located at Jaberā, and the average number of outdoor patients in 1902 was 44. There are also boys' and girls' schools. The proprietors are Sarwaria Brāhmans and are an old family.

Kaimur Hills.[1]—The eastern portion of the Vindhyan range of hills, commencing near Katangi in the Jubbulpore District of the Central Provinces (23° 26′ N. and 79° 48′ E.). It runs a little north of east for a distance of over 300 miles to Sasseram in Bihār (24° 57′ N. and 84° 2′ E.). The range after traversing the north of Jubbulpore District and the south-east of Maihar State turns to the east and runs through Rewah territory separating the valleys of the Son and Tons rivers and continues into the Mirzāpur District of the United Provinces and Shāhābād in Bengal. Its maximum width is 50 miles. In the Central Provinces the appearance of the Kaimur range is very distinctive. The rock-formation is metamorphic and the strata have been upheaved into an almost vertical position giving the range the appearance of a sharp knife-edged ridge. In places it almost disappears, being marked only by a low rocky chain and it never rises more than a few hundred feet above the plain in the Central Provinces. The Kaimurs enter Central India at Jukehī in Maihar State (23° 59′ N. and 80° 26′ E.) and run for 150 miles in a north-easterly direction forming the northern wall of the Son valley and overhanging the river in a long bold scarp of sandstone rock, from which near Govindgarh a branch turns off to the north-west. The range attains here an elevation of a little over 2,000 feet. In Mirzāpur the height of the hills decreases in the centre to rise again to over 2,000 feet at the rock of Bijaigarh with its ancient fort. Very interesting relics of prehistoric man have been found in the caves and rock shelters of the hills here in the form of rude drawings and stone implements. In Shāhābād District the summit of the hills consists of a series of saucer-shaped valleys, each a few miles in diameter, containing a deposit of rich vegetable mould in the centre and producing the finest crops. The general height of the plateau is here 1,500 feet above sea-level. The sides are precipitous, but there are several passes, some of which are practicable for beasts of burden. The ruined fort of Rohtās is situated on these hills. The rocks throughout consist principally of sandstones and shales.

[1] Reprinted from the draft article for the Imperial Gazetteer.

Kanoda.—A village in the Hattā tahsīl 14 miles north-west of Hattā, called locally Barī Kanodā to distinguish it from other villages of the same name. Its area is nearly 1,600 acres and the population in 1901 was about 80. It contains the remains of an old sculptured temple, and other temples in good condition which are built without mortar and are attributed to the Chandels. It has also the remains of a summer country-house built in the time of the Bundelās. The proprietor is a Rājput.

Kerbana.—A large village in the Hattā tahsīl 28 miles north-west of Damoh and on the Bewas river. Its area is 5,600 acres, and the population in 1901 was 1,200 persons as against nearly 1,400 in 1891. The village contains a small fort. The proprietor belongs to one of the leading Lodhī families of the District and has the title of Thākur. The Kerbanā clan of Lodhīs derive their name from this village, but the Bālakote family is the head of the clan. Kerbanā has a police outpost and village school.

Kishenganj.—A large village in the Damoh tahsīl 9 miles north-west of Damoh on the Batiāgarh road. Its area is 1,600 acres, and the population in 1901 was about 1,500 as against nearly 1,700 in 1891. The village derives its name from Krishna Rao, the ancestor of the present proprietors, who founded it. It was granted to him revenue-free by the Marāthās on condition of feeding all religious mendicants who came to the village. The proprietors are Marāthā Brāhmans and hold on a quit-rent grant of a quarter of the revenue assessed. The village contains a number of Baniās, who formerly grew *al* or Indian madder in this and the surrounding villages. The cultivation has greatly declined owing to the competition of imported dyes. The village has two tanks and a large stone well. It has a primary school.

Kota.—A small village 22 miles north-east of Damoh on the Beārma river, with an area of 1,000 acres and a population of about 550 persons. It has a fort which seems to

have been built by the Gonds, but was subsequently held by the Lodhīs. The present proprietor is a Kurmī.

Kundalpur.—A small village 20 miles north-east of Damoh on the road from Hindoria to Phuterā. It has an area of 1,100 acres and a population of some 400 persons. Kundalpur is a well-known sacred place of the Jains, and contains a number of temples situated at the northern end of a range of low hills on the left bank of the Beārma river, covering the hill and gleaming white in the distance. There are some 20 temples on the hill and 30 more at the foot of it near a tank. The temples are all square blocks with domed roofs and pinnacles at the corners. They are all whitewashed and look very like Muhammadan tombs The principal temple contains a colossal image of Mahavīra or Vardhamāna. The pedestal is 4 feet high and the figure 12 feet. The image has an inscription of 24 lines dated in the time of Chhatar Sāl in 1700 A.D. The tank is called the Vardhamāna tank and was improved by the Public Works Department in the famine of 1899-1900. Near the tank are two old Brahmanical temples of the single slab and flat-roofed pattern, both facing the north. One of them is empty, but the other still holds a standing figure of Vishnu. These temples are much older than the Jain ones and may probably be attributed to the 7th century. The village is the site of an important Jain fair which was in abeyance for about 30 years, owing to a deficiency in the local water-supply and has been revived in the last two years at the instance of Seth Brindāwan Parwār Baniā, who is the manager of the fair. The fair is held during the last seven days of the month of Phāgun (February-March), and the attendance varies between 5,000 and 10,000 persons. Some three to four hundred temporary shops are established for the sale of food and utensils. The important ceremony is the 'Jaljātra' when the idol is bathed in water ; the water is subsequently auctioned and the people buy a little and wipe it on their eyes and face. In 1903-04 the water fetched Rs 101. An annual *panchāyat*

of the Parwār Baniās is held on the occasion of the fair, at which all important cases which have arisen during the year are decided. The fines imposed go to a *bhandār* or fund which is devoted to the maintenance of the temples and to which offerings of money and jewels are also made by those present at the fair. The proprietor of the village is a Mārwāri Baniā.

Madkota.—A small village situated at the junction of the Sonār and Koprā rivers, on the border of the Damoh tahsīl near Sītānagar, and about 15 miles from Damoh. Its area is 1,600 acres and population about 250 persons. The village contains a temple of Mahādeo and a small fair is held here in January on the day of Til-Sankrānt. The proprietor is a Baniā.

Magron.—A small village in the Hattā tahsīl 8 miles west of Hattā. Its area is 1,700 acres and the population in 1901 was 550 as against 1,250 in 1891. The village contains two temples in fair repair said to have been built by the Gond Rājās. A weekly market is held on Saturdays which is largely attended by people from the adjoining Native States. There is a primary school. The proprietor is a Baniā.

Mariadoh.—A large village 12 miles north of Hattā. Its area is nearly 4,200 acres and the population in 1901 was 1,800 persons as against 2,300 in 1891. The village is situated on a small stream called the Jogidābar. The name seems to be derived from *marhia*, a small temple, and *doh* a pool. It contains a ruined fort built by the Marāthās or Bundelās. The bastions appear to date from an earlier period. Inside the fort is a summer-house, formerly used as a residence by the Rājās of Charkhāri to whom Mariādoh belonged until 1860, when it was exchanged for some territory in the Hamīrpur District. A number of Koshtās live in the village and weave *adhās* or women's cloths. Mariādoh has a police station-house and post office, a vernacular middle school with 63 pupils and a girls' school. The police building contains a room for inspecting officers. The village is owned by three

shareholders of different castes, one being a Kāyasth and the other two Gahoī Baniās who have acquired their shares from a Kurmī and a Kāchhi.

Narsinghgarh.—A village in the Damoh tahsīl 12 miles north of Damoh on the Batiāgarh road, and on the right bank of the Sonār. Its area is 2,200 acres and the population in 1901 was about 500 persons as against nearly 800 in 1891. During the period of Muhammadan ascendency it was the residence of a Dīwān or governor. One of these Shāh Taiyab built a fort and mosque which are now in ruins. His descendants who are styled Kāzīs of Narsinghgarh are now reduced to extreme poverty. Under the Marāthās Narsinghgarh was the capital of the pargana to which it gave its name. A second fort was erected by them and was partially destroyed by the British troops in 1857 as it afforded shelter to the Shāhgarh rebels. The present proprietor is a Brāhman.

Nohta.—A village in the Damoh tahsīl 13 miles south-east of Damoh on the Jubbulpore road, and near the junction of a small stream the Guraiyā with the Beārma river. Its area is 2,000 acres and the population in 1901 was close on 800 persons, having slightly increased during the previous decade. The name is supposed to be derived from *nao hāta* or nine bazars or markets. Judging from the number of sites of temples which are scattered in and around the village Nohtā must have been at one time a place of importance. The only old temple now standing is near the road about a mile to the south of the village. It consists of a shrine, hall and porch all fully decorated, but is now in ruins. Besides the Hindu shrines there would appear to have been one or more Jain temples as Jain figures are also found among the remains of statuary. Pillars, lintels, sculptures and other fragments may be seen throughout the village, built into the walls of houses and courtyards. A statue of a boar standing on the Phuterā tank at Damoh was brought from Nohtā. The village is believed to have been the seat of government of the Chandel kings when they ruled the District at about the period of the

12th century. Nohtā has a police outpost, a primary school, an encamping-ground and an inspection bungalow. The Nohtā bazar held on Sundays is one of the largest in the tahsil, and a great deal of rice is sold. The proprietor is an Ahir.

Panchamnagar.—A village in the Hattā tahsil 25 miles north-west of Damoh, and on the bank of the Bewas river. Its area is 228 acres and the population in 1901 was 530 as against 1,060 persons in 1891, having fallen by 50 per cent during the decade. The village stands on a steep hill, and the remains of ruined houses and stone enclosures indicate that it was formerly a place of importance. The name is supposed to be derived from that of Rāni Pāncho, wife of Rājā Hirde Sā of Garhākotā, the son of Chhatar Sāl. Hirde Sā built a fort which is now in ruins. A station of the Trigonometrical Survey stands here at an elevation of 1,820 feet. Panchamnagar is now only notable for the manufacture of country paper. A number of Barais are engaged in the business and they sell paper to the value of about a thousand rupees annually. The paper is made out of hemp and is used by bankers for their account-books.[1] The proprietor is a Brāhman.

Patera.—A large village in the Hattā tahsil 19 miles north-east of Damoh with which it is connected by a gravelled road. Its area is 5,500 acres and the population in 1901 was nearly 1,700 as against over 2,100 in 1891. The village has a tank which was improved in the famine of 1896-97. A number of cotton-weavers and dyers reside here and produce coarse cloth, quilts and mats. There are also several houses of Kasārs, who work in brass and bell-metal, and glass bangles are made. A weekly market is held on Mondays. The village has a vernacular middle school with 70 scholars, and a girls' school, a police outpost and a post office. The school building contains a room for inspecting officers. The proprietor is a Parwār Baniā.

Patharia Kalan.—A village in the Damoh tahsīl, and a station on the railway line 17 miles north-west of Damoh

[1] See also under "Manufactures," para. 167.

towards Saugor. Its area is 4,800 acres and the population in 1901 was nearly 2,700 persons, showing an increase of 50 during the previous decade. The village has some trade with the Garhākotā pargana of Saugor, and has small industries of brass and gold and silver-workers. A weekly market is held on Sundays. Patharia contains a police Station-house, a vernacular middle school with 96 pupils, a girls' school and a post office, and there is an inspection hut. There is also a branch dispensary. The descendants of an old Marāthā Brāhman family own this village. Patharia has a good tank, which retains water throughout the year.

Phutera Kalan.—A large village in the Hattā tahsīl 15 miles north-west of Damoh near the Batiāgarh road. Its area is nearly 3,000 acres and the population in 1901 was 1,600, having decreased by 70 during the previous decade. The village contains several temples and a tank, which was improved by Government in the famine of 1896-97. The mālguzār is a Kāyasth, a descendant of an official in the Native States, who took up the village and settled it when it had gone absolutely to waste. The village contains a primary school.

Raneh.—A large village in the Hattā tahsīl 8 miles east of Hattā, with which it is connected by a village road. Its area is 4,200 acres and the population in 1901 was 2,025 as against 2,826 in 1891. The village contains a very old well and a *marhā*, a small building in which it is said that the governor of the town used to sit and do his business. These are attributed to the Richhāria Brāhmans, a section of the Jijhotias who are supposed to have founded the village. Several families of them still reside there. The building contains an illegible inscription. Raneh has in all 16 tanks in which a quantity of *singhāra* or water-nut is grown, and has also a number of betel-vine gardens. The village has also many wells, but both wells and tanks dry up in the hot season, and there is a popular saying 'Raneh has 52 wells 'and 84 tanks, but still you can't get water there in the hot

'weather.' There is a considerable cotton hand-weaving industry and also a number of dyers. Hemp sacking is also woven, and is now used for floor-cloth. Raneh was formerly a centre of trade carried on by pack-bullocks, and hence the demand for sacking. It has a vernacular middle school with an attendance of 82 pupils in 1903-04, and a police outpost. A weekly market is held on Sundays. The village formerly belonged to the Pateria family of *Jijhotia Brāhmans*, but they have now lost it, and there are 16 shareholders all *Sanādhya* and *Jijhotia Brāhmans*. The inhabitants also mainly consist of these subdivisions of *Brāhmans*.

Rangir.—A small village 12 miles north of Damoh. Its area is 1,200 acres and the population under 100 persons. The village formerly contained a fort like that of Jatāshankar, built in the time of Chhatar Sāl and used as a shooting-box, but it is now altogether in ruins. Rāngir has a station of the Trigonometrical Survey at the height of 1,184 feet. The proprietor is a Baniā.

Satsuma.—A sacred place on the Sonār river 6 miles from Hattā on the road to Mariādoh. A hot spring issues from a hill here and flows into the Sonār. The river forms a deep pool at this place, and the name Satsūma, which means 7 bundles of rope, is said to be derived from the fact that on one occasion an attempt was made to measure the depth of of the spring, but though 7 lengths or bundles of rope were used it could not be done. The scenery of the river here is picturesque. A fair is held on the day of Til Sankrānt (11th to 13th January) at which some 5,000 persons assemble to bathe in the pool. The fair is called Burkī or Diving-Day because the bathers must put their heads under water and eat some food in that position. The pool contains a number of large mahseer, which are not killed.

Singorgarh.—A hill fort situated in Government forest 28 miles south-east of Damoh and 4 miles from the village of Singrāmpur on the Jubbulpore-Damoh road. The fort commands the Jaberā pass giving access to the road between

the Bhanrer and Kaimur ranges. West of Singorgarh it is said that there was formerly a great lake filling a circular basin in the hills with an area of 35 square miles; and 28 villages now stand on this area. Popular tradition assigns the construction of the fort to one Rājā Ben Basor, so called because he made annually a magic bamboo fan, and whenever he cut a piece of it off a number of his enemies were simultaneously destroyed. He took no taxes from his people, but made bamboo fans and sold them. His wife was called Kamalāvati because she could walk about the tank standing on a lotus leaf. The village of Bansīpur is said to be so called because the Rājā went there for fishing, *bansī* meaning a fish-hook. According to Sir William Sleeman the fort was built by Rājā Belo, one of the Chandel Rājās of Mahobā. Cunningham, however, attributes it to one Gaj Singh Pratihār or Parihār Rājput on the authority of an inscription of 8 lines which is recorded on a square stone pillar still standing on the top of the hill. In the inscription the fort is called "Gaj Singh Durg", *durg* meaning a hill-fortress, and General Cunningham thinks that the name of Singorgarh is a corruption of these words, the word 'Gaj' being dropped by elision and 'garh' added as a termination at the end. This derivation is of course only conjectural. The date of the inscription is Samvat 1364 or A.D. 1307. About half a mile beyond this pillar is another monolith with a short inscription, and from these it is inferred that at the period of the inscriptions this part of the country was in the hands of the Parihār Rājputs, who were feudatories of the Kalachuri or Chedi dynasty of Haihaya Rājputs.[1] At the close of the fifteenth century Dalpat Sā, the Gond Rājā of Garhā-Mandlā, removed his capital to Singorgarh, which he enlarged and strengthened. He died leaving his widow the beautiful Chandel princess Rānī Durgāvati as regent of his kingdom. In 1564 her territories were invaded by Asaf Khān, the Mughal Viceroy of Karā-Mānikpur. Durgāvati met the Imperial army on the

[1] See Chapter II, History.

family[1], who obtained this, with some other villages, as a grant for the services rendered by them in the Mutiny.

Tejgarh.—A village 20 miles south of Damoh on the Abhāna-Tejgarh road. The village stands on the bank of the Guraiyā river. Its area is over 700 acres and the population in 1901 was 1,000 odd, having decreased by 70 during the previous decade. Tejgarh was founded by one Teji Singh Lodhī some two centuries ago, whose descendant is the present Rājā of Hatrī. He built a fort of rubble stone set in mud, which is now in ruins. Tejgarh was the head-quarters of the pargana of the same name which contained 210 villages. The village has a primary school, police Station-house and a post office, and a dispensary was opened here in 1902. The police building contains a room for inspecting officers. Tejgarh was formerly a more important place than it now is, as is evidenced by the number of ruined houses to be seen. The present proprietors are Parwār Baniās.

Vindhya Hills.[2]—(Ouindion of Ptolemy). A series of hills separating the Gangetic basin from the Deccan, and forming a well-marked chain across the centre of India. The name was formerly used in an indefinite manner to include the Sātpurā hills south of the Nerbudda, but is now restricted to the ranges north of that river. The Vindhyās are not a range of hills in the proper geological sense of the term, that is, possessing a definite axis of elevation or lying along an anticlinal or synclinal ridge. The Vindhyan range to the north of the Nerbudda, and its eastern continuation, the Kaimur to the north of the Son valley, are merely the southern scarps of the plateau comprising the country known as Mālwā and Bundelkhand. The range has been formed by subærial denudation and is a dividing line left undenuded

Geographical extent and position.

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[1] See also under Leading Families.

[2] Reprinted from the draft article for the Imperial Gazetteer.

between different drainage areas. From a geographical point of view the Vindhyan range may be regarded as extending from Jobat (22° 27′ N. and 74° 35′ E.) in Gujarāt on the west to Sasseram (24° 57′ N. and 84° 2′ E.) in the south-western corner of Bihār on the east, with a total length of nearly 700 miles. Throughout the whole length of the range as thus defined it constitutes the southern escarpment of a plateau. The Rājmahāl hills extending from Sasseram to Rājmahāl and forming the northern escarpment of the Hazāribāgh highlands, cannot be correctly considered as a part of the Vindhyan range.

Orographical features.

The range commencing in Gujarāt crosses the Central India Agency from Jhābua State in the west, and defines the southern boundary of the Saugor and Damoh Districts of the Central Provinces. From here the Kaimur branch of the range begins and runs through Baghelkhand or Rewah into Bihār. The Kaimur hills rise like a wall to the north of the Son valley, and north of them a succession of short parallel ridges and deep ravines extends for about 50 miles. At Amarkantak the range touches the Sātpurā hills at the source of the Nerbudda. Westward from the Jubbulpore District the Vindhyan range forms the northern boundary of the valley of that river. Its appearance here is very distinctive, presenting an almost uninterrupted series of headlands with projecting promontories and receding bays like a weather-beaten coast line. In places the Nerbudda washes the base of the rocks for miles, while elsewhere they recede and are seen from the river only as a far-off outline with the plains of Bhopāl or Indore spread out below them. The rocks are sandstone of a pinkish colour and lie in horizontal slabs which commonly testify to their origin by curious ripple marks plainly formed by the lapping of water on a sandy shore. To the north of this escarpment lies the Bundelkhand or Mālwā plateau with a length of about 250 miles and a width at its broadest part of about 225. The plateau is

undulating and is traversed by small ranges of hills, all of which are considered to belong to the Vindhyan system.

Outlying ranges.

The most northerly of these minor ranges, called the *Bindyāchal*, cuts across the *Jhānsi*, Bānda, Allahābād and Mirzāpur Districts of the United Provinces nowhere rising above 2,000 feet. The range presents the appearance of a series of plateaux, each sloping gently upward from south to north, and ending abruptly in the steep scarp which is characteristic of these hills. Many outlying isolated hills are found in these Districts standing out on the plains beyond the furthest scarp. One small hill, called Pabhosā, stands on the left bank of the Jumna, the only rock found in the Doāb. The Bhánrer or Pannā hills form the south-eastern face of the Vindhyan escarpment and bound the south of the Saugor and Damoh Districts and the north of the Maihar State in continuation of the Kaimur, thus being a part of the main range. They run from north-west to south-east for about 120 miles. Their highest peak is that of Kalumār, which has an elevation of 2,544 feet. Two other branches of the range lie in Mālwā, starting respectively near Bhilsa and Jhābua with a northerly direction and bounding the plateau to the east and west.

Elevation and drainage.

The general elevation of the Vindhyan range is from 1,500 to 2,000 feet, and it contains a few peaks above 3,000, none of which are of any special importance. The range forms with the Sātpurās the watershed of the centre of India, and among others the Chambal, Betwā, Sonār, Dhasān and Ken rivers have their sources in these hills. The Son and Nerbudda rise at Amarkantak, where the Vindhyan and Sātpurā ranges join. The rivers generally rise near the southern escarpment and flow north and north-east

Geological formation.

Geologically the range is formed principally of great massive sandstones of varying consistency, alternating with softer flags and

shales, the whole formation covering an area 'not greatly inferior to that of England' (Mallet). The range has given its name to the Vindhyan system of Indian geological nomenclature. Over a great part of the Mālwā plateau the sandstone is covered by the overflowing Deccan trap, while from Ganurgarh fort in Bhopāl to near Jobat, the range itself is of basaltic formation, and the last sixty miles to the west from Jobat to near Jambughorā consist of hills of metamorphic rocks. Economically the Vindhyan rocks are of considerable value, the sandstone being an excellent building material which has been extensively used for centuries; the Buddhist topes of Sānchi and Barhut, the eleventh century temples of Khajurahā, the fifteenth century palaces of Gwalior, and numerous large forts at all important positions on the plateau having been constructed of this material. At Nāgode and other places limestone is found in some quantity, the pretty corraline variety extracted from the Bāgh cretaceous beds having been extensively employed in the palaces and tombs at Mandu; and at Pannā in the conglomerate which underlies the shales, diamonds are met with, though none of any great value have been extracted. Manganese, iron and asbestos are also found in various parts of the range. The lofty flat-topped hills and bold scarps which are such a marked feature of this range were early recognised as ideal sites for fortresses, and besides the historical strongholds of Gwalior, Narwār, Chanderī, Mandu, Ajaigarh and Bāndogarh, the hills are studded with the ruined castles of marauding Girasia and Bundelá Chiefs.

Forests.

The hills are generally covered with a stunted forest growth of the species found in the dry forests of Central India. Teak only occurs in patches and of small size, and the forests are generally noticeable for their poverty of valuable timbers.

Mythological associations.

The term 'Vindhyā' in Sanskrit signifies "a hunter" and the range occupies a considerable place in the mythology of India, as the great demarcating line between the Madhya-

desha or "middle-land" of the Sanskrit invaders, and the non-Aryan Deccan. The Vindhyās are personified in Sanskrit literature, where they appear as a jealous monarch, the rival of king Himālaya, who called upon the sun to revolve round his throne as he did round the peak Merū. When the sun refused, the mountain began to rear its head to obstruct that luminary, and to tower above Himālaya and Merū. The gods invoked the aid of Agastya, the spiritual guide of Vindhyā. This sage called upon the Vindhya mountain to bow down before him, and afford him an easy passage to and from the south. It obeyed, and Agastya passed over. But he never returned, and so the mountain remains in its humbled condition, far inferior to the Himālaya, to the present day. Another legend is that when Lakshman, the brother of Rāma, was wounded in Ceylon by the King of the Demons, he wished for the leaves of a plant which grew in the Himālayas to apply them to his wound. Hanumān, the monkey-god, was sent to get it, and not knowing which plant it was, he took up a part of the Himālayas and carried them to Ceylon. He happened to drop a portion of his load on the way, and from this the Vindhyan hills were formed.

Pioneer Press, No. 1909.—23-4-06.